

## **THESIS ABSTRACT**

Breaking News: A Study of The Effects  
of Live Television News Coverage During Armed Conflicts

Capt Sean S. McKenna  
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This study is a qualitative examination of how live television news coverage during armed conflicts affects military operational security and U.S. foreign policy. Through a review of literature on the history of media-military relations, an examination of current military policies and procedures, and a comparative analysis of opinions expressed by military public affairs and broadcast media representatives, the author assesses how live television news coverage affects U.S. military operations.

The author concludes that since live television coverage has become standard in today's low-intensity conflicts, the military must make contingency plans for broadcast media during wartime operations. Unlike the days of old when the military could limit media access to the war zone through pool arrangements or denial of entry, the media are now often in place and broadcasting even before U.S. forces arrive in the area.

Wartime friction often occurs between the military and the broadcast media because of the lack of institutional understanding between the two entities. Reporters often have little military knowledge or combat experience and most military members are unfamiliar with broadcast media procedures. To alleviate this and to build trust, enhanced peacetime programs are necessary to bring the two institutions together for regular talks and exercises.

The author also concludes the broadcast media play a key role in shaping the U.S. government's foreign policies on the use of military force. While the media does not set out to press the government into immediate action, by covering harrowing events that stir Americans' emotions, television news organizations cause the government to react to public demand and commit U.S. forces to regions in need. Oftentimes this means sending military forces off to obscure areas of the globe to perform peacekeeping and humanitarian missions that would not have been conducted had not television brought the need to light.

Finally, the researcher concludes the Internet and civilian satellite imagery are effective new technologies that enhance the capabilities of television news organizations. The Internet allows major networks to reach a larger audience by providing in-depth text and video. Likewise, satellite imagery allows the media to show static photographs of areas inaccessible to reporters, complementing news coverage from ground reporters in the region. As the technology becomes better and less expensive, even more media will rely on satellite images to help report on military conflicts.

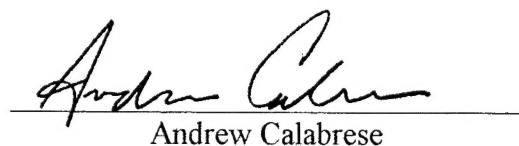
BREAKING NEWS: A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF  
LIVE TELEVISION NEWS COVERAGE DURING ARMED CONFLICTS  
by  
SEAN STEPHEN McKENNA  
B.A., Southwest Texas State University, 1992

A thesis proposal submitted to the  
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This thesis entitled:  
Breaking News: A Study of the Effects of  
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has been approved for the Department of  
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Frank Kaplan



Andrew Calabrese



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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signators, and we find that  
both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of  
scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my daughter, Devin Rose McKenna, who was born January 28, 2000, just two days after I finished Chapter Two. For the first two months of her life, Devin was beside me as I completed this research. Her smile and good spirits helped me along every day as I sat at my computer in her nursery typing what seemed like an endless flow of information. She is the most precious person in the world to my wife, Leola, and me. I will never forget the semester I spent working on this thesis because it was the time when Devin came into this world.

McKenna, Sean S. (M.A., Journalism)

Breaking News: A Study of the Effects of Live Television News Coverage During Armed Conflicts

Thesis directed by Professor Frank Kaplan

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The author also concludes the broadcast media play a key role in shaping the U.S. government's foreign policies on the use of military force. While the media do not set out to press the government into immediate action, by covering harrowing events that stir Americans' emotions, television news organizations cause the government to react to public demand and commit U.S. forces to regions in need. Oftentimes this means sending military forces off to obscure areas of the globe to perform peacekeeping and humanitarian missions that would not have been conducted had not television brought the need to light.

Finally, the researcher concludes that the Internet and civilian satellite imagery are effective new technologies that enhance the capabilities of television news organizations. The Internet allows major networks to reach a larger audience by providing in-depth text and video. Likewise, satellite imagery allows the media to show static photographs of areas inaccessible to reporters, complementing news coverage from ground reporters in the region. As the technology becomes better and less expensive, even more media outlets will rely on satellite images to help report on military conflicts.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the Issue**

Vietnam was considered the first *television* war. Americans could sit around their television sets, in the comfort of their homes, and receive nightly updates on the war effort courtesy of the three national television networks. On-scene reporters, some deep in the jungles and others in fire-bombed villages, detailed the life of the soldier, the conditions they faced, and the death that beset the American military on an almost daily basis. For the first time since the Civil War, Americans could see and feel war, only this time they didn't have to actually be there. Through news reports, Americans could be proxy to the horrors found on the battlefield.

Since the 1960s, technological advances have made it even easier for national television networks to bring the sights and sounds of war directly into the living room. With lighter equipment and satellite uplinks, reporters can now give live reports, taking the time-space element entirely out of the equation. Scenes that were once only available to military and government officials can be viewed by the population at the same time. But is this immediate coverage of war either necessary or desirable? What benefit do people stand to gain from seeing graphic images such

as a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia, as was broadcast in 1993? Can people possibly put individual images into the right context in regards to the overall war effort? Author/professor Phillip Taylor asserts that:

Whatever impression we gain of a given conflict via the media is not necessarily an accurate representation of what is actually happening while it is happening. The gap between war's image and war's reality remains extremely wide throughout its duration... Real wars are multi-faceted, complicated and brutal events in which the participants themselves rarely have the full picture of what is going on while it is actually happening... We cannot therefore reasonably expect the camcorders to do something which the commanders can not.<sup>1</sup>

The images captured in Vietnam, although not shown live, were wrongly thought by many military personnel to have lost the war for the United States, primarily because television helped show the difficulty and confusion of the war. Through nightly reports, the media, it was thought, helped "fuel antiwar sentiment that eventually led to the American pullout."<sup>2</sup> Hostility between the media and the military would fester for the next 30 years. Relations between the two entities have only in recent years reached the point where standard operating procedures during armed conflicts can be mutually agreed on.

The military and the media will never agree on how wartime information should be meted out to the American public. The military thrives on secrecy and

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<sup>1</sup>Philip Taylor, "War and the Media," University of Leeds [On-line], Available HTTP: [www.leeds.ac.uk/ics/arts-pt2.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ics/arts-pt2.htm), (November 10, 1999).

<sup>2</sup>Bob Levin, "The Demons of Vietnam; The War May Exact a High Price," MacLean's (February 1991).

operational security, while the media tout their freedom to report events truthfully and timely. University of Arizona professor and former newspaper reporter Jacqueline Sharkey said that “successfully waging a war requires operational security, yet secrets are anathema to journalists, who need as much information as possible to ensure that their stories are written in a truthful and accurate context.”<sup>3</sup> Along with that though, Sharkey also wrote that journalists understand the military’s need to keep tactics and movements under wraps and work hard not to violate that secrecy.<sup>4</sup> To ensure that operational security is maintained, the military and government have long used several measures to prevent and control media activity during wartime, including: (1) prior restraint; (2) post hoc censorship; (3) restricting access to troops and units; (4) accreditation; and (5) sanctions for rules violations. As professor/author Bernard C. Cohen stated:

If the government ever loses its power to manage news coverage in a theater of war, its capacity to use military force [rather than humanitarian] purposes may well be lost. It would be hard to imagine the successful prosecution of the Civil War had [photographer] Matthew Brady been replaced by modern television network news.<sup>5</sup>

The fact is that modern television networks have become a part of armed conflicts, by reporting incidents as they happen to millions of viewers. Rear Admiral (retired)

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<sup>3</sup>Jacqueline Sharkey, Under Fire: U.S. Military Restriction on the Media from Grenada to the Persian Gulf (Washington: Center for Public Integrity, 1991), 12.

<sup>4</sup>Sharkey, 12.

<sup>5</sup>Bernard Cohen, “A View from the Academy,” In L. Bennett & D.L. Paletz (Eds.) Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1991), 11.

Brent Baker, former Naval chief of information, said the information and cyberspace age has made it next to impossible for the military to control the media on the battlefield. He predicts future wars will include open and independent global reporting of military and diplomatic operations, a limitation of government-controlled pools because the media will already be in place ahead of the military's arrival, and a lack of security review of journalists' material because reporters can work independent of the military using their own lightweight equipment.<sup>6</sup>

As military-imposed wartime restrictions on the media fall by the wayside, both the media and the military realize future wars will be covered differently. Author Douglas Waller wrote:

The same technology that is revolutionizing the way the Pentagon fights wars is also changing the way the media cover them. The media can now provide viewers, listeners, and even readers almost instant access to the battlefield. With lighter video cameras, smaller portable computers, cellular phones, their own aircraft, and worldwide electronic linkups, the media can report on any battlefield no matter how remote and no matter how many restrictions the Defense Department tries to place on coverage. In the future, technology will give journalists even more independence.<sup>7</sup>

The broadcast media's advances have no doubt contributed to rapid changes in Department of Defense (DOD) regulations regarding military-media relations. Under regulations revised in 1993, and updated in 1996, the DOD calls for reporters

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<sup>6</sup>Brent Baker, "War & Peace in a Virtual World," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (April 1997), 36-40.

<sup>7</sup>Douglas Waller, "Public Affairs, the Media, and War in the Information Age," in R.L Pfaltzgraff Jr. and R.H. Schultz Jr. (Eds.) War in the Information Age (Washington: Brassey, 1997), 323.

to enjoy open and independent coverage and a limitation on security review.<sup>8</sup> The directive also states media pools should not be used beyond the first 24 to 36 hours of conflict, journalists will have access to all major military units, military public affairs officers will not interfere with reporting, and journalists will be able to file stories on their own rather than through military channels. Many media members who assisted in getting these principles adopted into an official regulation are optimistic about future relations with the military. Louis Boccardi of the Associated Press said, "It is the consensus of our group that the guidelines offer the promise of the kind of coverage the citizens of a democracy are entitled to have."<sup>9</sup>

Even with the media and military coming to terms on how future wars should be covered, no one is sure how the next war will be covered. Operation Desert Storm was the first conflict that featured live reports from hostile areas. Reporters from organizations such as the Cable News Network (CNN), the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) carried live feeds from the Middle East into American homes. Since then, live television coverage during armed conflicts has become standard, with journalists routinely giving real-time updates from such beleaguered areas as Somalia, Haiti and Kosovo. However, these operations were relatively small, involving only a minuscule portion of American military power. The big question remains how the media and military will

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<sup>8</sup>Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Department of Defense Directive 5122.5 (Washington: Department of Defense, March 29, 1996).

<sup>9</sup>Louis Boccardi, qtd in "Agreement on War Coverage Guidelines," Associated Press News Release (May 22, 1992).

interact when live coverage is conducted during a large-scale operation. Many military and government officials, including former chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, Gen. (retired) John Shalikashvili, and U.S. National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake, surmise that real-time reporting from the battlefield undercuts public support and can lead to a change in foreign policy. They contend that Americans, when able to see the action on television, will not be able to stomach American soldiers being killed on a regular basis and will influence Congress to end the conflict sooner than imagined. On the other hand, noted media members such as Dan Rather and Bernard Shaw feel that, while television does affect how people feel and react to critical situations, it does not do so to the degree that foreign policy is affected. That is left to the politicians to spell out clearly and make changes when deemed appropriate.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Former CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite, testifying before a U.S. Senate Committee on press censorship during wartime in February 1991, said, "History begins to be distorted with every second that passes ... so it's very important to get first impressions on camera as events happen ... [However] it is not crucial to get the war on the air as it happens."<sup>10</sup>

The possible ramifications of live television reporting from war zones are many: the chance military operational security will be compromised; situational information may be incorrect, incomplete or misinterpreted; or that on-scene

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<sup>10</sup>C. Germani, "Military Experts Say Reporters Should Have More Battlefield Freedom," Christian Science Monitor (February 22, 1991), 4.

journalists may unduly influence the actions of the military personnel or civilians present at the time.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of real-time television coverage during armed conflicts. The author will look at the history of real-time reporting during war and assess what might be in store during future conflicts. The author will also research the relationship between the military and broadcast television media to determine how well the two sides have worked together to provide accurate, timely news coverage of military conflicts. Moreover, the author will examine what concerns there are that live coverage will compromise military secrecy during war. Additionally, the author will tackle the debate regarding television news' effect on influencing foreign policy decisions. Finally, the author will make recommendations to enhance future media-military relations in regards to television access to the battlefield and conduct once on it.

### **Research Questions**

Television coverage of wars is not a new phenomenon. As far back as World War II film cameras were used to capture the events that took place on the battlefield. Film crews landed with the Allied forces at Normandy. During the Korean conflict, newsreel reporters had unfettered access to the front line. Vietnam provided the first opportunity for television networks to show footage of events that were less than a day old. Since then, technology has allowed the process to speed up even more, to where there is no time between when the videotape rolls and the television viewer sees. Real-time war reporting has been a reality for more than 10 years, and better

equipment allows for more and more situations to be captured on video. How has the military adapted to this media advancement? Have guidelines for television reporting been discussed? Although it would be difficult for the two sides to agree on how best to exploit live television reporting, what ground rules have been set to avoid confusion and professional misconduct during future conflicts?

Troop safety is the number-one concern during wartime. What impact does live coverage have on operational security? Could irresponsible reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if a breach of security occurs? Television networks, through their reporting, are able to expose criminal and civil injustices and turn the public's attention to humanitarian causes. What power does live television reporting have to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the military? Are there consequences for Americans watching live television coverage of U.S. service members being injured or killed?

Finally, new media technologies seem to crop up every decade that make information processing even easier. Live television coverage first became a reality in the 1970s. In the 1980s, satellite imaging of objects on earth became available to media outlets. The 1990s brought media into the world of computers where the American public could access real-time information while staring at a monitor. What role could new technologies play in the next armed conflict? Is there a concern that untrained reporters could exploit the Internet as a medium to document war events in real time? What effect might the media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage?

In summary, the research questions are:

1. Technological advancements have permitted real-time television reporting from the battlefield. How have the broadcast media and military adapted to it? Have guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the broadcast media regarding live coverage?
2. What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live news reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is a violation of this sort?
3. Television has the power to expose injustices and turn attention to causes not in the public light. Does live reporting from a war zone have the power to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the military? What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of U.S. service members being injured or killed?
4. New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored in to media coverage of military conflicts. What concern is there that people may use the Internet to exploit information captured live on the battlefield? What effect might the broadcast media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage?

### **Scope of Study**

The author will do a qualitative analysis using existing research materials on broadcast media and military relations, military public affairs practices and policies, and telephone interviews. Interview subjects will fall into one of two study groups, either military or broadcast media representatives. The compositions of each study group are listed in Appendices E and F. Separate interview agendas were designed for each study group and are listed in Appendices G and H. A total of 20 people were interviewed: 10 media representatives and 10 military representatives. Nine of 10 members of the media were male, while six of the 10 military representatives were

male. All interviews were taped with the permission of the subject and were transcribed.

#### Data Limitations

This thesis looks only at the impact that broadcast media -- specifically television -- have on the execution of American armed conflicts. This leaves out the role that print and radio media may play in influencing foreign policy and public opinion. The author is chiefly interested in flushing out the importance of real-time visuals in painting a picture of armed conflict.

Moreover, scheduling problems with some members of both the media and military precluded their inclusion in the study. Only those media members who had previous experience with wartime television coverage were included. The author felt that interviewing media representatives who had not experienced the trials and tribulations of wartime reporting could not lend appropriate insights into the topics being discussed in this study.

Furthermore, only U.S. Air Force representatives were included among the military study group. Because the research is being conducted by an Air Force officer for the benefit of the Air Force, it addresses issues from that service's perspective. However, because public affairs programs and policies toward media are similar in nature and all follow the same Department of Defense guidelines, limiting the study to Air Force personnel will not be a factor.

#### Other Limitations

As mentioned, the author is an Air Force officer conducting research for the

benefit of his branch of service. An eight-year veteran, the author has worked with broadcast media during two low-intensity conflicts: Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti in 1994 and Operation Northern Watch in Saudi Arabia in 1995. While he has his own opinions regarding live television coverage during wartime, he feels he can maintain a great deal of fairness since he has never directly interacted with media during a major armed conflict. The research interview agendas were designed to minimize subjectivity.

### **Thesis Content**

Chapter I introduces and gives background on the issue. Television coverage of wars has been around for nearly 40 years, but real-time reporting has become viable only in the last 10 years. How this relatively new technology is being used and what the military are doing to contain it are among the items discussed in the chapter. The chapter also includes a discussion of research questions and research methods.

The Second Chapter introduces the literature on the subject. The history of wartime television coverage is reviewed as well as the relationship broadcast media have had with the military during that time. Moreover, the effects of coverage on operational security and foreign policy are addressed. What impact new technologies such as commercial satellite imaging and the Internet might have on wartime reporting is also examined.

Chapter III outlines the author's methodology for the study. Details about how each research question is addressed in the study as well as short biographies of each interviewed subject are included. Additionally, the limitations of the research

design and approaches are described.

The Fourth Chapter includes findings of the individual study groups. These findings are grouped into topics to establish areas of agreement and disagreement among members.

Finally, Chapter 5 discloses the author's conclusions and includes recommendations on how to improve broadcast media and military relations for future armed conflicts. Suggestions for further broadcast media/military research are also given.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### **Chapter Overview**

On Oct. 3, 1993, U.S. Army Rangers engaged in bloody fighting on the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia. United Nations Operation Somalia, a military effort to capture Somali rebel Mohammed Aidid, had turned ugly. By the end of the day 18 Americans had been killed, 77 injured and another one captured. The horrors of the battle, however, were not merely for those who were there to witness them. Television networks around the world hours later showed a dead American soldier's body being beaten and dragged through the streets by a mob of celebrating Somalis. The videotape, captured by a Toronto news crew, horrified Americans watching it on the evening news.<sup>1</sup> Bernard Kalb, director of the Harvard Center on Press, Politics and Public Policy, said, "The picture was a symbol of American power being dragged through the Third World, unable to master the challenges of the post-Cold War Era."<sup>2</sup> The event led Congress to propose a halt to funding for the operation and

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<sup>1</sup>Joanna Neuman, Lights, Camera War (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 227.

<sup>2</sup>Qtd in Harry G. Summers, The New World Strategy (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 54.

forced President Bill Clinton's hand.<sup>3</sup> Soon thereafter, Clinton announced that U.S. forces would pull out of Somalia by the end of the year. How big a role did broadcast media play in causing the withdrawal of American troops? Would the operation have continued if the dead American hadn't been shown on television? Those questions are not easy to answer, but this chapter attempts to get at what scholars and experts think regarding the impact of live television coverage from the battlefield. More specifically, this chapter defines what constitutes the various levels of military conflicts, looks at the relationship between the broadcast media and the U.S. military, examines the history of televised war, debates the impact of broadcast television in shaping national foreign policy, and finally examines future technologies that may influence broadcast television reporting during U.S. armed conflicts.

First, the author looks at what constitutes a military conflict. Military conflicts are typically thought of as large-scale affairs with easily identifiable enemies. However, there are varying levels of armed conflicts, and a review of those levels would be helpful in establishing what types attract the most media attention and potentially stir the most controversy.

Next, a study of the relationship between reporters and the U.S. military public affairs personnel is vital. These are the two groups who work together during conflicts to ensure a fair and equitable system of news gathering. While the military wants to maintain high operational security at all times, the media's job is to uncover as much information as possible and report it to their readers and listeners.

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<sup>3</sup>Summers, 52.

Sometimes these two philosophies are at odds with each other, causing problems, confusion and disagreements.

Third, it is useful to trace the history of televised war. Advancements in coverage have been made every decade since the beginning of the Twentieth century. Even though Vietnam was the first conflict that featured television coverage, earlier wars saw reporters use film cameras to capture the action. Nowadays, lightweight equipment and satellite uplinks makes it even easier for television crews to move around and capture images from the battlefield virtually instantly.

Further, a discussion of the impact television coverage has on the shaping of national foreign policy is helpful. Some experts claim television images of a faraway conflict can either help or hurt an administration's ability to manage the conflict, depending on the strength and understanding of the policy in place. Others say live television images have no impact on the government's task of implementing foreign policy, that lawmakers do not react directly to their constituents' pleas either for or against the United States' continuing participation in an armed conflict.

Finally, the chapter concludes with a look at future technologies that may or are already impacting the broadcast media's ability to bring live images of armed conflicts into America's television sets and computers. Specifically, the technologies of commercial satellite imaging and the Internet are discussed. How big a role they will play in the function of network television news remains to be seen.

### **Definitions of Armed Conflicts**

Broadcast media have varying degrees of access to war depending on what type of conflict it is. The easier it is to move about the war zone, the more television coverage will be given to the conflict. If the fighting is intense and danger to troops as well as to media is high, then typically much less freedom of movement will be granted to broadcast media.

The three types of military conflicts, according to military officials and political scientists, are high-intensity conflicts (HIC), medium-intensity conflicts (MIC) and low-intensity conflicts (LIC). High-intensity conflicts in modern terms involve the use of nuclear weapons to quell enemy forces. Before nuclear weapons redefined levels of conflict, the only two HICs of the last 100 years were the First and Second World Wars. There has yet to be a nuclear exchange between nations.<sup>4</sup>

Medium-intensity conflicts, also known as general wars, involve “two major powers which employ their total resources and where the national survival of a major belligerent is likely in jeopardy,” according to the Department of Defense.<sup>5</sup> Both nations involved use all available air, naval and land forces to gain victory. Examples of MICs involving the United States include Operation Desert Storm in 1991, Vietnam from 1964 to 1973, and Korea from 1950 to 1953.

During medium-intensity conflicts, broadcast media personnel often fall under

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<sup>4</sup>“DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” Department of Defense Joint Publication 1-02 (Washington: Department of Defense Joint Doctrine Division, 1999) 66.

<sup>5</sup> DOD, 66.

military reliance for access, transportation and lodging, thus preventing them from reporting live unless given permission from military authorities. Although technological advances have made it easier for television reporters to conduct real-time coverage, the complex logistics of maneuvering while ensuring their own safety continue to make MICs difficult to cover live. Media typically have to first be accredited in the region and then agree to a set of guidelines as to what kind of material is off-limits for broadcast. In extreme circumstances, reporters' material may be examined or censored, and those found in violation of the guidelines may be restricted from further access to the conflict area. Over the years, the media have often complained about the constraints placed on their news gathering abilities during wartime, but little has been done to change the system in place during medium-intensity conflicts.

Low-intensity conflicts, also referred to as military operations other than war (MOOTW), overtly engage the military forces of two or more nations, but stop short of employing total resources. These conflicts are waged using a combination of military, political, economic and informational means.<sup>6</sup> Categories of LICs include peacekeeping operations, humanitarian missions and special operations. Examples of recent LICs include Bosnia/Kosovo from 1992 to 1999, Haiti in 1994, Somalia from 1992 to 1993, and Panama in 1989.

Broadcast media members covering low-intensity conflicts are usually not under military control and are free to roam as they wish, even among opposing

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<sup>6</sup> DOD, 73.

factions. Media still rely on the military to gain access to installations and to get reaction from troops in the field, but generally have much more freedom in terms of movement within the conflict area. While the incidences of death and destruction are lower than in higher intensity skirmishes, the chances for compromising troop and media safety still exist because of the daily instability of the region. Author Doug Waller noted:

The changing nature of war – more low-intensity conflicts, no neat lines of attack, no forward edges of battlefields – is ... making it more difficult for the Defense Department to control the media during a conflict. The distinction between combatants and noncombatants is blurring. Battle zones have become porous; reporters are able to cover both enemy and friendly forces.<sup>7</sup>

Army Major William G. Adamson, in a research paper for Air Command and Staff College, stated that “while [MOOTW’s are] not as physically threatening as war, [the atmosphere] is potentially more precarious diplomatically.”<sup>8</sup> According to Adamson, this is because there are dynamic rules of engagement and a lack of clarity in the objectives of many nations working under the United Nations’ flag. This confusion can be a problem since the actions are broadcast real-time on television.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Waller, 324.

<sup>8</sup>William G. Adamson, The Effects of Real-Time News Coverage on Military Decision-Making (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Command and Staff College, March 1997), 23.

<sup>9</sup>Adamson, 23.

### The Military-Media Relationship

The media and the military will never be in bed together. The two entities are dichotomous when it comes to the question of what the American public has a right and a need to know about. Political scientist Daniel Hallin said that journalists see themselves as ‘watchdogs,’ adversaries of the government, champions of truth and openness, checking the government’s ability to conceal and dissemble.<sup>10</sup> In a perfect world, the media would have full access to all that goes on. From the military perspective, the media would only get access to that which makes the military look good. Air Force Lt. Col. Douglas Goebel summed it up:

The military cites operational security reasons for preventing the early release of details of on-going operations. It wants to preserve the element of surprise and ensure the secrecy necessary to carry out sensitive operations. Additionally, the military believes the press wants to make headlines rather than just report the news. The media, on the other hand, believe the military hides failures and deceives the American people.<sup>11</sup>

Despite this difference in philosophies, the two sides are forced to work together in conflict after conflict. R.W. Apple Jr., the Washington bureau chief for the *New York Times*, said, “Ultimately the military cannot achieve its ends without the cooperation of the press, and the press cannot achieve its ends without the

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<sup>10</sup>Daniel Hallin, The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1986), 5.

<sup>11</sup>Douglas J. Goebel, Military-Media Relations: The Future Media Environment and Its Influence on Military Operations (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air War College, April - April 1995), 1.

cooperation of the military.”<sup>12</sup>

### The Broadcast Media During War

In a democratic society, the media serve two important functions: (1) inform the public on what policies its government is pursuing and how those policies are being executed and (2) independently record for history what happened.<sup>13</sup> Broadcast media during wartime perform both functions, highlighting the events that shape the United States’ involvement in the conflict and recording for history the who, what, when, where, why and how of war. Now more than ever, the media have the technology and the responsibility to record events accurately. Kalb said, “With wars now being waged in real-time...with the line between perception and reality so naturally blurred, the responsibility of the press to monitor the affairs of the state has never been greater.”<sup>14</sup>

### Live Television Coverage

President George Bush’s press secretary Marlon Fitzwater said after Desert Storm that “the power of the image on television is so much stronger than the power of the word. It doesn’t matter how many caveats you put in there, the picture tells a

<sup>12</sup>Qtd in Frank Aukofer & W.P. Lawrence (Ed.) America’s Team: The Odd Couple: A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military (Nashville: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995), 90.

<sup>13</sup>James. B. Brown, “Media Access to the Battlefield,” Military Review (July 1992), 11.

<sup>14</sup>Marvin Kalb, “A View from the Academy,” in L. Bennett & D.L. Paletz (Eds.) Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (Chicago: University of Chicago), 6.

story that establishes itself in the mind's eye no matter what is said.”<sup>15</sup> According to Hallin, television is able to show the horrors of war better than its print contemporaries because it is a visual medium.

Royal Air Force Major Paul Edwards said “the consequences of a reporter equipped with an ultra lightweight camera, able to transmit live to a news network from anywhere in the world, simply cannot be understated.”<sup>16</sup> British television reporter Nik Gowing concurred, calling this “the tyranny of real-time news.”<sup>17</sup> No longer do television crews have to get permission from the military to transmit live images.

Media, for the most part, no longer face a high risk of being censored or limited in what they can broadcast during wartime. Portable satellite dishes make it possible for media to send images immediately, independently and uncensored. According to Gowing, “This is the new reality. The media beaming back, uncontrolled before even the first flash signals are being received in national capitals.”<sup>18</sup> Edwards said that because of this technology, the conduct of war is

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<sup>15</sup>Qtd in Dr. Eliot A Cohen (Ed.) Gulf War Air Power Survey (Washington: DOD Logistics and Support, 1993), 148.

<sup>16</sup>Paul Edwards, “The Military-Media Relationship – Time to Redress the Balance?” RUSI Journal (October 1998), 44.

<sup>17</sup>Nik Gowing, “Conflict, the Military and the Media – A New Optimism?” The Officer (May/June 1997), 47.

<sup>18</sup>Gowing, 47.

brought to everybody's attention, not just to military and government officials.<sup>19</sup>

Leeds University mass communications professor Philip Taylor stated, "The ability of the media increasingly to bring home such scenes [of horror and destruction] has widened the arena of warfare beyond those directly involved in or directly affected by the fighting."<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the ability of the media to broadcast real-time transmissions from the battlefield to their television networks is no longer just an imagined resource. Air Force Lt. Col. Marc Feldman wrote in a research paper on the media:

Live television news coverage is a reality of modern warfare that places more than just military constraints on operations. While military objectives might be easily attained with more economy and less risk to American lives by carpet bombing an adversary's capital, the gruesome sights of massive collateral damage and civilian deaths beamed instantly as it [sic] was occurring, make such tactics politically untenable. Such means might have been acceptable in World War II, but the watchful eye of the news media make such messy alternatives no longer acceptable.<sup>21</sup>

Live coverage of any event in itself is a good thing. Being able to show what actually happened when it happened is a useful tool. Media coverage can be positive in showing what life is like for those involved in the conflict and be a morale booster to families of soldiers serving in the afflicted area.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Edwards, 43.

<sup>20</sup>Taylor.

<sup>21</sup>Marc D. Feldman, The Military/Media Clash and the New Principle of War: Media Spin (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University, 1992), 42.

<sup>22</sup>Goebel, 25.

However, in some instances experts say that live media coverage is problematic. Reporter Peter J. Brown stated that during Desert Storm reporters often got carried away with going on camera for live reports. He said:

The press has become captivated by its ability to generate live images instantly. During the [Persian Gulf] war, this bred awkward presentations, too often awash in hypothesis. Live coverage was excessive, and often it offered no concrete information. The military is visibly apprehensive now about the impact and role of live coverage, while the media itself questions the need for such an uncontrolled and, at times, almost overwhelming tide of direct video feed.<sup>23</sup>

The fine line between showing images that will enhance the knowledge of the viewing public and showing ones that will deeply disturb is difficult for a reporter to toe during wartime. Taylor said:

Media coverage of limited wars can be intrusive, which is why there are guidelines in reporting pictures of the dead and injured casualties of war. Opponents of war who criticize the media for sanitizing such images of war miss this crucial point. A rule of thumb in the two world wars was to only show pictures of enemy dead; that way, watching relatives could not discover the loss of their loved ones from the media, although they could see that the war inflicting casualties on the other side. People understand that in war, people die. Whether they want to see it on their television screens is quite another matter.<sup>24</sup>

Brown went on to write that occurrences of live coverage will only become more frequent as technology gets better. Not only will broadcast reporters want to show the images as they happen to give themselves higher exposure, but they will want to do so to scoop other networks in this era of competitive pressure. This can lead to

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<sup>23</sup>Peter J. Brown, "The DOD and the Flyaway Dish," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (August 1991), 62.

<sup>24</sup>Taylor.

several problems, according to political scientist Richard Burt. First, competition promotes leaks that can damage sensitive operations. It is difficult to dissuade a network from releasing information it knows other networks do not have. Second, many scoops are not accurate, but it is difficult for the military or government to set the record straight if it is involved in a sensitive operation. Third, reporters get so caught up in having exclusive information that the event becomes more important than the content of the information itself. Finally, when reporters continuously release sensitive information or images, the military and/or government will clamp down on media in the war zone, keeping them in constant check and making it more difficult to broadcast without military intervention.<sup>25</sup>

CNN first set the standard for live coverage in 1990, broadcasting hundreds of hours of real-time reports during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, keeping viewers tuned in who might otherwise have defected to other channels had it not been for its up-to-the-second broadcasts.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, it forced other media organizations to meet this standard to compete in the news market.<sup>27</sup> It also spawned new 24-hour news competitors, chiefly the Fox News Network, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service, and MS-NBC, all of whom use first-on-the-scene

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<sup>25</sup>Richard C. Burt, "News Media and National Security," in Simon Serfaty (Ed.) Media and Foreign Policy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 143.

<sup>26</sup>Goebel, 18.

<sup>27</sup>Goebel, 18.

as their reporting mantras.<sup>28</sup>

Not only are the major networks making profits in the American market, but now their satellites are beaming signals worldwide. CNN International is available in more than 200 countries. A survey conducted in Israel revealed that 28 percent of that nation's population watches CNN at least once a day.<sup>29</sup> The pressure for these networks to create or produce new programming to keep their viewers watching is tremendous.

Army Gen. (retired) Colin Powell noted that television networks are likely to do anything necessary to improve their ratings and increase commercial revenue. He stated, "We [the military] should always be suspicious that the media will break a secret just for the purpose of getting a commercial advantage."<sup>30</sup> With the influx of broadcast media in recent years, that is a big concern.

Futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler predicted in 1993:

CNN's current dominance in the worldwide TV news market is temporary, for rival networks are already in formation. Within a decade or two we can expect a multiplication of global channels, paralleling the diversification of media already taking place inside the Third Wave countries ... Instead of a handful of centrally controlled channels watched by all, vast numbers of humans will eventually gain access to a dazzling variety of over-the-border messages their political and military masters may not wish them

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<sup>28</sup>Robin Knight, "Global TV News Wars," U.S. News & World Report (December 26, 1994), 70.

<sup>29</sup>Walter Rodgers, "The Network Correspondent as Historian, Diplomat, Student, and Vampire," in Joe S. Foote (Ed.) Live From the Trenches (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 34.

<sup>30</sup>Qtd in Dinsmore, 258.

to hear or see.<sup>31</sup>

Some media representatives take a hardcore stand on the media's First Amendment right to broadcast images of events as they happen. American journalists consider the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of the press sacred, and many reporters feel the right to report live from the battlefield is covered under this amendment. Author Arthur Duncan asserted that while the military's priority is to protect troops and equipment, the media contend they have a duty to inform the public of events as they unfold.<sup>32</sup> *CBS Evening News* anchorman Dan Rather agreed, "Live television is another tool for getting the best possible information to individual citizens in a fast manner. It isn't always orderly."<sup>33</sup> *NBC News* vice president Cheryl Gould stated that Americans should not be denied battlefield information merely because things are going badly for the United States. The networks have no more right to withhold battlefield images than they do election results, according to Gould.<sup>34</sup>

Many media experts and journalists take an opposite position, believing that live coverage is nice to have, but during wartime it is not necessary to show real-time

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<sup>31</sup>Alvin and Heidi Toffler, War and Anti-War (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 174.

<sup>32</sup>A. Duncan, "Mixing with the Media," Despatches (Spring 1996), 25.

<sup>33</sup>Qtd in Barrie Dunsmore "Live from the Battlefield," in Pippa Norris (Ed.) Politics and the Press: The News media and Their Influences (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers), 266.

<sup>34</sup>Dunsmore, 252.

images. *NBC News'* Pete Williams opined, 'I just think it's hard to articulate a sound national reason that will get applause outside the National Press Club for live coverage on the battlefield ... It's hard to stake a claim that live coverage has to be there for any other reason than the fact we can do it and it would be neat.'<sup>35</sup>

Barrie Dunsmore, a former *ABC News* correspondent, also disagreed with his colleagues. He said reporters do not have a constitutional right to conduct live reporting nor does the public have a right to know about everything occurring during war.<sup>36</sup> Public opinion seems to echo this sentiment. The American public has been quick in the past to support media limitations during war, and the major television networks have offered up only symbolic protests in response to these restrictions.<sup>37</sup>

*ABC News* anchorman Peter Jennings is opposed to the prospect of live coverage, stating, 'I tend to be inclined against live coverage of events...basically because I think technology is making it difficult for us to think and contemplate what's going on.'<sup>38</sup> Ted Koppel of ABC's *Nightline* is also against the unfettered practice of live war coverage, citing the information garnered from the broadcast is available to enemy forces and could compromise troop security.<sup>39</sup> Famed *CBS News* anchor Walter Cronkite said in a 1991 Congressional hearing, 'History begins to be

<sup>35</sup>Qtd in Dunsmore, 252

<sup>36</sup>Dunsmore, 260.

<sup>37</sup>Dunsmore, 260.

<sup>38</sup>Qtd in Dunsmore, 252.

<sup>39</sup>Qtd in Dunsmore, 267.

distorted with every second that passes ... so it's very important to get first impressions on camera as events happen ... [However] it is not crucial to get the war on the air as it happens.”<sup>40</sup>

CNN anchor Bernard Shaw, who relayed via cellular phone live updates of the start of the Desert Storm air attacks from his hotel room in Baghdad in January 1991, has serious reservations about going live during war. He said, ‘I would be worried about lack of perspective, because no matter where you were, you would be operating with no overview of what was going on.’<sup>41</sup>

#### Experience and Education of Broadcast Reporters

Invariably, as in any occupation, there are many types of television reporters. Most are professional, some have extensive wartime experience, others are relative neophytes when it comes to military affairs. Some are always looking for exclusive coverage that will take them to the next step of the journalism precipice, others are content to stay in the same job for years. Some are household names, others are not. Regardless of their status, all reporters who take on the task of reporting from the battle zone are responsible for the coverage they give, down to the scenes they transmit to the network and the words they use to give the stories context.

Whenever reporters go off to cover an armed conflict, they can quickly be bunched into two groups: (1) those with experience dealing with the military and (2) those without it. Understandably, the first type will have an easier time understanding

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<sup>40</sup>Germani, 4.

<sup>41</sup>Dunsmore, 262.

and adapting to the situations around them, but that is not to say there is not a place for the second group. Merely, they have to work harder to learn the military organization and the technical language. Most of the major television networks have reporters who are experienced in national security affairs, some of them covering the military on a daily basis. These news veterans cover what is known as "The Golden Triangle" in Washington, D.C., their regular beat comprised of the Pentagon, the State Department and the White House.<sup>42</sup> Working out of offices in the Pentagon, these reporters eat, sleep and breathe defense issues. On a daily basis, about two dozen reporters from the major television networks, national newspapers and magazines cover national defense from the Pentagon.<sup>43</sup> During times of crisis, reporters accredited to cover the Pentagon can swell to more than 200.<sup>44</sup> The regular national security network reporters have vast experience in the field, usually taking years to work their way up to the national level. Their experience in the Pentagon is particularly useful during armed conflicts. According to Georgia Tech international affairs professor Patrick O'Heffernan:

Reporters who are educated about war and its technology can provide insight and context to the live feeds, bypassing censorship in many cases. For instance, reporters who were knowledgeable about the Patriot missile systems [during Desert Storm] would not have reported hits when they

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<sup>42</sup>Steven Hess, The Government/Press Connection (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1984), 45.

<sup>43</sup>William J. Small, "The Gulf War: Mass Media Coverage and Restraints," in McCain, T.A. and Shyles, Leonard (Eds.) The 1,000 Hour War: Communications in the Gulf (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 28.

<sup>44</sup>Small, 28.

saw explosions in the sky that later research showed were misses.<sup>45</sup>

*NBC News* correspondent Roger O'Neil said network news reporters are typically older, more experienced and better writers. They have "been there" and "done that" many times, across the globe, making them ideal resources for covering wars.<sup>46</sup>

Although it seems like these "Washington insiders" would have a complete picture of U.S. national defense, some contend they are too inside to get the real story. Journalist William V. Kennedy remarked, "All such Pentagon correspondents have been exactly that ... their every move tracked by ... defense public affairs officials charged with making sure they learn nothing other than what the Department of Defense wants them to learn."<sup>47</sup>

Lesser-known reporters, mostly local city journalists and freelancers, also play a major part in wartime coverage. They usually do not have the extensive defense background that the Pentagon reporters have, which makes them wild cards during the chaos of war. Oftentimes they spend the conflict trying to learn the complexities of the material by asking basic questions more experienced reporters find annoying. Journalist John Whiting said that during Desert Storm "the military did not know how to deal with reporters with too little background. Inept questions at briefings were

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<sup>45</sup>Patrick O'Heffernan, "Media Influence in U.S. Foreign Policy," in L. Bennett & D.L. Paletz (Eds.) Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (Chicago: University of Chicago), 244.

<sup>46</sup>Roger O'Neil, "Bottom Feeders," in Joe S. Foote (Ed.) Live from the Trenches (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 23.

<sup>47</sup>William V. Kennedy, The Military and the Media (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 31.

frequently asked. Some people had press credentials but were only vaguely working at real reporting. Their credentials got them there.<sup>48</sup> Veteran reporter Peter Braestrup said another problem during the Gulf War was “[inexperienced] journalists wouldn’t know whether they were reporting something that was classified, or should be classified, or not. That’s what really scared me most about having these guys wandering around.”<sup>49</sup> British scholars Miles Hudson and John Stanier said it is virtually impossible for a greenhorn reporter to adapt to covering war:

The inexperienced journalist will very easily become totally emotionally overcome by the first sight of war and its inevitable horrors and, as a result, may well fail to understand and report on the context in which he or she is operating.<sup>50</sup>

Despite this thinking, war is sexy and naturally draws the interest of reporters everywhere. *Los Angeles Times* journalist Melissa Healy said, “You see a lot of people with very little exposure to the military dip into military reporting with the notion of making their mark, winning their Pulitzer, whatever.”<sup>51</sup> Wartime reporting is a golden opportunity for national exposure and a chance to garner a promotion for a job well done. Television reporters of all levels of credibility realize this and volunteer at the drop of the hat for the assignment to cover wartime operations.

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<sup>48</sup>John Whiting, “War-Live!,” U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (August 1991), 66.

<sup>49</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 100.

<sup>50</sup>Miles Hudson and John Stanier, War and the Media (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 310.

<sup>51</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 119.

Apple remarked, "One wonders in a war now what would be the role and the practice of people like Geraldo Rivera and Maury Povich and the *National Star* and people like that. They could cause us serious problems ... in this area of bedroom journalism."<sup>52</sup>

To help overcome the handicap of inexperience, reporters need to overcome their fear of getting too close to the military and take advantage of peacetime training.<sup>53</sup> First, reporters can learn through area studies and language training, according to National Public Radio correspondent Tom Gjelten.<sup>54</sup> Being grounded in international humanitarian law, the rules of war, and the Geneva Conventions will only serve to help the broadcast journalist during wartime.<sup>55</sup> Second, becoming acquainted with military equipment and personnel can be accomplished through coverage and participation in military training exercises. *Wall Street Journal* reporter John Fialka said the media should become involved in peacetime exercises so they understand what the military has to do in a certain situation, what the military is capable of doing, and then be able to explain clearly what the military did.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 90.

<sup>53</sup>Warren Strobel, "Pen and Sword Need to Make Peace," *Newsday* (June 26, 1997), A45.

<sup>54</sup>Tom Gjelten, "Professionalism in War Reporting: A Correspondent's View," Carnegie Commission [Online], available <HTTP://www.hamline.edu/world/gjelten/index2.html>, (November 10, 1999).

<sup>55</sup>Gjelten.

<sup>56</sup>Aukofer and Lawrence, 107.

According to Healy, “[The media] know that wars are going to happen, and the U.S. military is going to be called into action at regular intervals. We need to have reporters who understand how the military works and who can be available.”<sup>57</sup> This large-scale education effort is no small undertaking, at least in the mind of *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* journalist Harry Levins. Levins purports that press apathy and shrinking budgets have contributed to less knowledge about the military.<sup>58</sup> He said that since the U.S. armed forces have shrunk over the last decade and become less visible in American life, military coverage has moved down the priority list of media organizations, along with labor unions and bowling leagues.<sup>59</sup> Getting the military moved back up the list to where reporters cover it as a regular beat will be difficult.

No matter what amount of experience a broadcast journalist has, reporting from the battlefield takes a certain amount of bravado. Sir Winston Churchill once said, “There is nothing so exhilarating as being shot at and missed.”<sup>60</sup> For some war correspondents, this is a creed. CNN Middle East reporter Walter Rodgers said war is “where the news is, that’s where the story is, and that’s where you go. It is the

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<sup>57</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 119.

<sup>58</sup>Harry Levins, “Covering the military must be learned the hard way,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (March 7, 1999), B5.

<sup>59</sup>Levins, B5.

<sup>60</sup>Qtd in Joe S. Foote (Ed.), *Live from the Trenches: The Changing Role of the Television News Correspondent* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 129.

greatest adrenaline rush in the world ... There is nothing like war for a high.”<sup>61</sup>

Television reporters were frequently caught in the crossfire during the civil war in Bosnia in 1992.<sup>62</sup> The Gulf War in particular produced many instances of exciting television as reporters went on the air live from the war zone. Dunsmore reported from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in a chemical weapons protection suit as air raid sirens sounded around him. Expecting a Scud missile attack at any moment, he told anchorman Peter Jennings he would have to stop talking for a moment so he could put his gas mask on, which he proceeded to do on camera. It provided a compelling scene. Other reporters had similar incidences live on camera in Saudi Arabia and Israel.<sup>63</sup>

According to author Douglas Kellner, these moments of live television showed a situation out of control and provided drama and excitement, capturing a large audience for the duration of the war.<sup>64</sup> However, broadcast reporters not only run the risk of physical danger to themselves but also the danger of reporting events out of context. Hudson and Stanier remarked that it is impossible for a correspondent to know everything going on around him since the camera cannot be in more than one place at a time. It is called “the illusion of truth” wherein the media reports what they see or hear and believe to be true. However, since everything cannot be reported the

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<sup>61</sup>Qtd in Foote, 129.

<sup>62</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 278.

<sup>63</sup>Douglas Kellner, Gulf TV War (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 114.

<sup>64</sup>Kellner, 115.

whole truth is not, nor ever can be, represented.<sup>65</sup> The dramatic effect of stunning incidents are what entices the networks to show live coverage, even if they are isolated incidents that do not reflect typical behavior.<sup>66</sup> Well-known BBC television reporter Martin Bell said, “People blithely imagine that journalists are where the news is. Alas, not so; the news is where the journalists are.”<sup>67</sup>

Reporting live the events around you is commonly referred to as “rooftop journalism,” wherein a reporter drops in to a location and starts filming the first event he comes across. Author Johanna Neuman argued many “rooftop journalists” are not responsible enough to report in real-time. Because they cannot make sense of what is happening around them when reporting live, Neuman stated, they simply report “something is happening” when, in fact, nothing may be going on.<sup>68</sup> Fialka called this untamed search for news “the four-wheel school of journalism.”<sup>69</sup> He said:

The [news reporting] field is full of feckless romantics. We saw it in the field [during Desert Storm] ... when they said, ‘We’re just going to drive around on the battlefield and cover this war, and nobody is going to hurt us, and all the [military] units will welcome us.’ Those people were fools. The four-wheel school is largely fueled by people who really have no clue what they’re getting into.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 315.

<sup>66</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 109.

<sup>67</sup>Martin Bell, In Harm’s Way (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995), 59.

<sup>68</sup>Neuman, 213.

<sup>69</sup>Aukofer and Lawrence, 108.

<sup>70</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 108.

### Military Public Affairs During War

Department of Defense Directive 5122.5 contains a “Statement of Principles for News Media Coverage of DOD Operations.”<sup>71</sup> The nine principles serve as a checklist for military public affairs’ handling of media during wartime. The first one states, “Open and independent reporting will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.”<sup>72</sup> It is a bold statement for a military that for the last 130 years has done its best to control the field of information on the battlefield. The complete list of principles in summary are:

1. Open and independent reporting during U.S. military operations;
2. Pools no longer serve as the standard means of coverage; if they are necessary, they should be as large as possible and be disbanded after 24-36 hours when possible;
3. Even under open coverage, pools may be necessary for specific remote events or when space is limited;
4. Journalists will be credentialed by the U.S. military and abide by security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations; failure to do so may result in suspension or expulsion. Also, organizations should make every effort to send experienced journalists to the battlefield;
5. Journalists will have access to all major military units, except during some special operations;
6. Military public affairs officers will serve as liaisons, but will not interfere with reporting;
7. Under open coverage, military commanders will permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible; the military is responsible

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<sup>71</sup>Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Department of Defense Directive 5122.5 (Washington: Department of Defense, March 29, 1996), 6.

<sup>72</sup>Directive 5122.5, 6.

for transporting pools;

8. Compatible with its capabilities, the military will supply facilities to allow for timely, secure and compatible transmission of pool products and make those facilities open to independent journalists when possible. Journalists will be able to file stories on their own so long as they don't compromise electromagnetic operational security.

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DOD National Media Pool system.<sup>73</sup>

For broadcast media desiring to cover armed conflicts live, these principles read like a recipe for success. However, the military system is not designed to allow reporters to roam wherever they want and report whatever they want. It is much more complicated than that.

The United States, and many other nations, have long tried to "muzzle" war reporters under the guise of "keeping secrets from the enemy," with an unstated reason of "keeping secrets from the citizens back home."<sup>74</sup> From the Revolutionary War through today, the military places guidelines and restrictions to access in place to limit the amount of information the media are able to report regarding national security. Political scientist Steven Livingston said:

Experience in recent wars indicates that when and where possible, the military will attempt to control the movements of journalists and the content of their reports, behavior rooted in two concerns: fear that the 'wrong' pictures will undermine public or congressional support for the effort and, second, that journalists will inadvertently disclose

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<sup>73</sup> Directive 5122.5, 7.

<sup>74</sup> Arthur Lubow, "Read Some About It," in Hedrick Smith (Ed.) The Media and the Gulf War (Washington: Seven Locks, 1992), 94.

tactical or strategical information to the enemy.<sup>75</sup>

According to Heidi and Alvin Toffler, ‘First Amendment guarantees of press freedom mean that U.S. [military] spin doctors have to be more subtle and sophisticated than those of countries in which totalitarian control of the media is still a fact.’<sup>76</sup> Patrick Sloyan, a reporter who covered Desert Storm for *New York Newsday*, said, ‘I don’t think the political leadership – where they’re going to send our troops in to get killed or risk getting them killed – are going to permit photographs, eyewitness accounts, or television coverage of those events.’<sup>77</sup>

ABC’s Jennings sees the military viewpoint and its hesitance to allow broadcast media to report live from the battlefield. He remarked:

The military would prefer to fight a war in secret. They would prefer that we [the media] were not there, except utterly and totally under their control, because it is the nature of military campaigns to have as much under control as you can ... If I were a military commander, the last thing I would ever want is the risk that one body ... should be allowed to be exploited by people who are opposed to either the administration or the particular engagement.<sup>78</sup>

Chief among the military’s concerns is the media would, either purposefully or accidentally, report sensitive information that United States’ adversaries would have

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<sup>75</sup> Steven Livingston, ‘Beyond the CNN Effect,’ in Pippa Norris (Ed.) Politics and the Press: The News Media and Their Influences (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 307.

<sup>76</sup> Toffler, 175.

<sup>77</sup> Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 167.

<sup>78</sup> Dunsmore, 248.

access to.<sup>79</sup> Air Force Col. Alan Campen wrote, "Instant broadcasts from the battle zone threaten to alter the actual dynamics and strategies in war. [It may well] transform reporters from dispassionate observers to unwitting, even unwilling, but nonetheless direct participants."<sup>80</sup> With global television networks in place, every nation on earth has access to broadcasts transmitted during wartime. Even 10 years ago, Saddam Hussein and his military leaders could watch CNN's coverage of the Gulf War for military intelligence purposes.<sup>81</sup>

The most effective way of limiting or censoring media activities is to deny them access to troops and military locations.<sup>82</sup> However, since it is becoming more and more difficult for the military to keep broadcast media away from the battlefield because of the changing nature of war, the growing number of media outlets, and the media's use of better equipment, the threat of a media breach in military operational security exists. The number of media covering American armed conflicts has grown exponentially over the last 60 years. In World War II, only 27 print journalists went ashore during D-Day and only six were on Omaha Beach. During the Korean War, 270 journalists worldwide were accredited to cover the conflict. In Vietnam, the largest number of journalists covering the war was 637 in 1968. Around 600

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<sup>79</sup>Livingston, 307.

<sup>80</sup>Alan Campen, The First Information War (Fairfax, VA: AFCEA International Press, 1992).

<sup>81</sup>Rodgers, 35. Neuman, 212.

<sup>82</sup>Taylor.

reporters made an effort to cover the Grenada operation in 1983. However, upwards of 1,600 media members flooded into Saudi Arabia when Desert Storm kicked off in 1992.<sup>83</sup> The sheer size of the media contingency in Desert Storm led to the formation of press pools for logistical and support purposes. It is reasonable to assume that a war approaching the level of Desert Storm would attract more media representatives today, leading to an even greater potential for a breach in operational security and a military desire to control the number and movements of journalists.

Most media members have no intention of giving away troop locations or other military secrets and the military would be quick to quell television coverage should it occur. Author Joanna Neuman predicted that, in the next war, “the military will seek more than ever to contain information, [and] to restrict the length of war, [making it all] the better to fight war off-screen while protecting the images and words that flash on-screen.”<sup>84</sup> Livingston predicted that when covering an armed conflict, news organizations may unintentionally reveal information that leads to unnecessary casualties and even the possible failure of a mission.<sup>85</sup>

Both media and military members see any compromise of American troops, due to television cameras, as unforgivable. However, according to Army General (retired) Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of Allied Forces during Desert

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<sup>83</sup>David Arant and Michael Warden, “A Clash of Views on the Role of the Press in Time of War,” in Thomas McCain and Leonard Shyles (Eds.) The 1,000 Hour War: Communication in the Gulf (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 32.

<sup>84</sup>Neuman, 263.

<sup>85</sup>Livingston, 298.

Storm, the reality of live television coverage must be factored into wartime planning in the same way weather and other uncontrollable factors are.<sup>86</sup> The planning stages of any armed conflict would involve media, political and military players working together to set hard guidelines for live coverage. Professor Steven Badsley stated, "Any military control over the media in wartime would have to be institutional rather than physical, and based on cooperation rather than exclusion or coercion."<sup>87</sup>

Media members are not against the idea of negotiations, wanting to avoid the military's considerable wrath while being guaranteed the right to broadcast live. Tom Johnson, president of CNN, understands the potential problem of live wartime reporting:

I think it is definitely a danger; there is no doubt it's a danger. Whenever battlefield conditions occur, that is live battlefield conditions, there will be almost out of necessity some types of coordination [with the military] so that in no way would we jeopardize movements of troops, movement of ships, anything that would endanger the lives of troops on any side ... I think you would have in the Congress and God knows where else, you'd have a firestorm if "live" lead to loss of lives.<sup>88</sup>

Major Paul Edwards wrote the military believes it is in the best position during wartime to determine when television coverage may imperil the lives of American forces, but the media contend the military always errs on the side of caution and oftentimes suppresses media coverage when clearly operational security is not a

<sup>86</sup>Dunsmore, 253.

<sup>87</sup>Stephen Badsey, Modern Military Operations and the Media (Camberley, England: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 1994), 7.

<sup>88</sup>Dunsmore, 254.

factor.<sup>89</sup> While it is no secret the military does its best to control the media's movements during crucial stages of war, military officials purport that such measures are necessary. Former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, Gen. Colin Powell, stated that when reporters and cameramen greeted Navy Seals and Marines in Somalia at the initial beach landing site in 1993, the servicemen had every right under military law to forcibly suppress anything or anyone, including television reporters or camera-light holders if necessary, that could possibly have compromised operational security.<sup>90</sup> Reflecting back on Desert Storm, Powell said he would have locked the media up had they had the capability of providing real-time coverage that could have subsequently provided valuable strategic information to Iraqi forces.<sup>91</sup> Although it has never come to that, the idea of the military completely shutting out the media from a war zone is not far-fetched. The military possesses the capability of jamming civilian communications satellites necessary for television uplinks, but that technology is unlikely to be used because of international sensitivities.<sup>92</sup> However, other measures that have been used in the past -- primarily severe sanctions for violations and denial of access to operations -- are feasible. John Wolfman of the Associated Press said:

There are press restrictions every day. You see it in the White House, the Department of Urban and Housing Development, the Hall of States, even the Detroit Lions training camp. I don't know anyone in journalism

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<sup>89</sup>Edwards, 45.

<sup>90</sup>Dunsmore, 256.

<sup>91</sup>Dunsmore, 257.

<sup>92</sup>Edwards, 47.

who doesn't recognize that the military has a right to set restrictions on press and public access to its people and its facilities.<sup>93</sup>

As Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote following the seminal *Schenck vs. United States* decision affirming the conviction of a pamphleteer during World War I, "When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured as long as men fight."<sup>94</sup>

As it stands now, guidelines for media conduct have been established and agreed on between the military and the media. Even that may not make media operations clear cut next time around. Dunsmore said most media members see guidelines as a set of general principles, nice to follow but carrying no real weight. The military on the other hand, used to following orders every day, sees guidelines as enforceable rules with consequences if violated.<sup>95</sup>

### **History of Televised War**

Broadcast media for decades have complained about the lack of access to the front. Although it has been reported that Vietnam was an uncensored war where journalists could roam freely without military intervention, in actuality guidelines were placed on reporters in the war zone. The trend continued to a large extent through

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<sup>93</sup>Qtd in Aukofer and Lawrence, 174.

<sup>94</sup>Qtd in Donald Gillmor, J.A. Barron & T.F. Simon (Eds.) Mass Communication Law: Cases and Comment, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (Boston: Wadsworth Publishing, 1998), 14.

<sup>95</sup>Dunsmore, 262.

the armed conflicts of the 1980s and on into the 1990s. To put media restrictions into perspective, it is useful to give a thorough historical overview of television reporting from the battlefield.

### The Korean Conflict

Television was in its infancy when the Korean War began on June 25, 1950. The three networks – ABC, NBC and CBS – featured only morning-to-evening programming and the nightly newcasts lasted for only 15 minutes, hardly time to cover the world's events.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, only 16 percent of American households owned a television set. A full 95 percent of Americans still relied on the radio for their daily news.<sup>97</sup>

Most newscast reports on the war featured photographs with voice-overs from radio reporters assigned to Korea. Occasionally the networks received footage of the action from a Defense Department-controlled newsreel pool that provided the images to all those willing to pay expenses.<sup>98</sup> The first television news cameraman in Korea was Charles J. DeSoria of Hollywood's KTTV-TV, who offered coverage on a syndicated basis. His delayed footage was regularly featured on New York's WPIX,

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<sup>96</sup>Clarence R. Wyatt, Paper Soldiers: The American Press and the Vietnam War (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), 144.

<sup>97</sup>Michael Emery, On the Front Lines: Following America's Foreign Correspondents Across the Twentieth Century (Washington: American University Press, 1995), 110.

<sup>98</sup>Emery, 110.

Chicago's WGN, San Francisco's KRON, Detroit's WWJ, and Atlanta's WCON.<sup>99</sup>

Despite these occasional reports from the Korean front lines, the war remained a radio and print reporter's domain.

### Vietnam War

Television news reporting matured tremendously during the Vietnam War. At the outset of the conflict in 1963, none of the three networks had a bureau in Vietnam, although correspondents assigned to Japan made frequent visits there.<sup>100</sup> A big turning point came in September 1963 when both CBS and NBC went to half-hour evening newscasts, setting the stage for more in-depth reporting from Vietnam. ABC followed suit, extending from 15- to 30-minute broadcasts in early 1965.<sup>101</sup>

Vietnam has become widely known as the first television war. The development of a much lighter film camera, the CP-16, and the increasing speed of transportation and communications made it possible.<sup>102</sup> While true, the process of getting footage from Point A – Vietnam – to Point B – network studios in New York – was nonetheless laborious. Most television reporters first sent a telegram to their network describing the type of footage that was shot, whereupon the network made a decision on how to get it to New York. Most of the film was flown from Saigon to New York, which allowed viewers in the United States a chance to see footage that

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<sup>99</sup>Emery, 110.

<sup>100</sup>Wyatt, 144.

<sup>101</sup>Wyatt, 144.

<sup>102</sup>Hallin, 129.

was two or three days old.<sup>103</sup> If the report was a breaking story or a dramatic development, the footage could be edited in Tokyo and transmitted via satellite to New York at a cost of roughly \$4,000 for three minutes of film.<sup>104</sup> Film sent this way could be seen on American television the next day.

The first television war story to touch a nerve of the American public came on August 3, 1965, when *CBS News*' Morley Safer reported on a U.S. Marine unit burning down a small village with Zippo lighters.<sup>105</sup> He explained how the Vietnamese townspeople were not allowed to move their belongings before their houses were torched and closed his report by saying:

Today's operation shows the frustration of Vietnam in miniature. There is little doubt that American fire power can win a military victory here. But to a Vietnamese peasant whose house means a life of backbreaking labor, it will take more than presidential promises to convince him that we are on his side.<sup>106</sup>

According to *CBS News* president Frank Stanton, he received a call late that night from President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who said, "Frank, are you trying to fuck me? This is your president, and yesterday your boys shat on the American flag."<sup>107</sup>

Dramatic reports like Safer's were the exception rather than the rule for a number of reasons. First off, it was difficult for a television correspondent to operate

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<sup>103</sup>Neuman, 181. Wyatt, 146.

<sup>104</sup>Peter Braestrup, Big Story (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), 34.

<sup>105</sup>Neuman, 181.

<sup>106</sup>Wyatt, 145

<sup>107</sup>Wyatt, 145

in the field. Not only would he have to secure transportation for himself, but he also had to find room for his camera man, his sound man, along with 100 pounds of equipment.<sup>108</sup> Second, despite popular belief, the networks were reluctant to show gory visuals, realizing the public's limited taste for graphic footage. Reports showing dead or wounded soldiers were edited heavily and bodies were usually only shown after having been placed in body bags. Hallin's research concluded that somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of network footage from Vietnam showed any glimpses of dead or wounded soldiers.<sup>109</sup> Most coverage consisted of showing soldiers on patrol or firing at an unseen enemy.<sup>110</sup> A *CBS News* directive at the time stated:

Producers and editors must exercise great caution before permitting pictures of casualties to be shown. This also applies to pictures of soldiers in a state of shock. Obviously, good taste and consideration for families of deceased, wounded or shocked takes precedence. Shots can be selected that are not grisly, the purpose being not to avoid showing the ugly side of war, but rather to avoid offending families of war victims.<sup>111</sup>

Unlike in future military operations, broadcast media members in Vietnam had relatively easy access to troops and locations.<sup>112</sup> According to professor Phillip

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<sup>108</sup>Wyatt, 146.

<sup>109</sup>Hallin, 129-130.

<sup>110</sup>Neuman, 181.

<sup>111</sup>Qtd in Francis Faulkner, Bao Chi: The American News Media in Vietnam (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts, 1981), 1.

<sup>112</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 106.

Taylor, the media were able to go wherever they wanted, at their own risks.<sup>113</sup> Army and Marine operations were strategically defensive, involving little movement, so reporters knew where the troops were located and could drive to battle sites generally unimpeded.<sup>114</sup> However, easy access did not necessarily mean it was safe for reporters. During the war, nine television network employees (reporters, camera men and sound men) were killed and many others wounded.<sup>115</sup>

While access was important to the media, the lack of military censorship was another perk.<sup>116</sup> Hallin said it was the first time in modern warfare reporters could expose "what really happened" and show abuses and stupidity on the part of military members.<sup>117</sup> Authors David Arant and Michael Warden remarked, "By making every facet of the war unusually accessible to any correspondent who turned up in Saigon, the military lost control of the flow of information.<sup>118</sup> The setup was perfect for reporters wanting to shoot straight with their audience -- television footage was sent directly from the camera to the networks without the military ever laying eyes on it.

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<sup>113</sup>Taylor.

<sup>114</sup>David Benjamin, "Censorship in the Gulf," Auburn University [Online], Available <HTTP://web1.duc.auburn.edu/%7Ebenjadp/gulf/gulf.html> (November 10, 1999).

<sup>115</sup>Peter Braestrup, Battle Lines: A Report on the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fund Task Force on the Military and the Media (New York: Priority Press, 1985), Dedication.

<sup>116</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 106.

<sup>117</sup>Hallin, 132.

<sup>118</sup>Arant and Warden, 22.

This was not to be the case in future conflicts.

The only military restrictions placed on media in Vietnam were a simple set of ground rules detailing the types of information that could not be released in a report.

The limitations included:

1. There will be no casualty reports on a daily basis and reporters should refrain from giving out unit identifications.
2. Troop movements should not be announced and will not be confirmed until the enemy knows of the movement.
3. No unit identifications should be given when reporting on battles.
4. Similar specific information should not be released on air strikes.
5. Next of kin should not learn of a death through a news photograph and privacy rights of the wounded should be respected.<sup>119</sup>

The potential penalty for violating the restrictions was loss of credentials or accreditation for 30 days.<sup>120</sup> However, the media complied to the letter of the law with the guidelines. From 1962 to 1968, only three U.S. media correspondents were found in violation of the restrictions.<sup>121</sup>

Many members of the military and the government placed much of the blame for the loss in Vietnam squarely on the shoulders of the military. Army Generals William Westmoreland and Maxwell Taylor believed “television carried a gory and distorted picture of the [Vietnam] war into American living rooms and scared the

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<sup>119</sup>Emery, 160.

<sup>120</sup>William M. Hammond, The Military and the Media: The U.S. Army in Vietnam 1968-1973 (Washington: Center of Military History, 1996), 4.

<sup>121</sup>Hammond, 5.

public.”<sup>122</sup> President Richard Nixon said:

In each night’s TV news and each morning’s paper the war was reported battle by battle, but little or no sense of the underlying purpose of the fighting was conveyed ... More than ever before, television showed the terrible human suffering and sacrifice of war ... the result was a serious demoralization of the home front, raising the question whether America would ever again be able to fight an enemy abroad with unity and strength of purpose at home.<sup>123</sup>

For Hammond, the Vietnam War was not lost through media coverage, but because the United States’ government failed to “prosecute the war more vigorously.” He added, “What alienated the American public was not news coverage, but casualties. In fact, the American public was generally supportive of the war until 1967.”<sup>124</sup> John E. Mueller agreed with Hammond, “Whatever impact television had, it was not enough to reduce support for the war ... until casualty levels had far surpassed those of the earlier war [in Korea].”<sup>125</sup>

#### Grenada - Operation Urgent Fury

In the interim between Vietnam and the early 1980s, television networks moved into the era of electronic news gathering (ENG), where old film cameras were replaced by video cameras, eliminating the need for chemicals, film and operating

<sup>122</sup>Qtd in Carol Innerst, “War in the Gulf: The Military vs. the Press,” The Washington Times (January 25, 1991), B3.

<sup>123</sup>Qtd in Bruce Cumings, War and Television (New York: Verso, 1992), 84.

<sup>124</sup>Qtd in Levin.

<sup>125</sup>John E. Mueller, War, Presidents, and Public Opinion (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), 167.

processors. The advantages included drastically improved picture quality and a simplified editing process.<sup>126</sup> However, the biggest change was in ENG's microwave transmitters and dishes installed on news vans. A news operation could now send out a live signal to a transmitter tower which would relay the coverage to the network. Live, short-distance television reporting had become a reality. Long-distance coverage was still a decade away.<sup>127</sup>

While the relationship between the media and military forces had not been cozy since Vietnam ended 10 years earlier, in the days leading up to the Grenada invasion in 1983, members of the American media at least thought they had the freedom to get to and cover military actions. The media recognized the government's right to keep the operation a secret, but they also insisted they had an equally important right to take notes once the action started.<sup>128</sup> That right was never realized, however, because when some 600 reporters arrived in Barbados, expecting to be transported to cover the action in Grenada, they were told access had been denied to the tiny island because of what the U.S. government officially deemed "operational security" reasons.<sup>129</sup> The Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger, along with the operation's joint task commander, Vice Admiral Joseph W. Metcalf III, made the

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<sup>126</sup>Michael Murrie, "Communication Technology and the Correspondent," in Joe S. Foote (Ed.) Live from the Trenches (Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 96.

<sup>127</sup>Murrie, 97.

<sup>128</sup>Gergen, 57.

<sup>129</sup>Aukofer and Lawrence, 44.

decision to bar the media, claiming the government had only 39 hours to plan the attack, which was insufficient time to include plans for media logistical needs.<sup>130</sup>

What the media failed to understand was the deep-seated fear the military and government held that the media could turn public opinion against the conflict.

Describing the fear, Goebel wrote:

The military realized the extremely powerful impact of nightly displays of war casualties on the news. It also realized that, even if the conflict was militarily successful, the media shock could make people question whether the sacrifice was worth the cost in lives and resources.<sup>131</sup>

Political analyst David Gergen, concurred, "Many reporters suspected -- correctly -- that some officials wanted to keep them off Grenada to pay them back for Vietnam and to prevent them from filming wounded or dead American soldiers, pictures that might sour public support for the operation."<sup>132</sup>

For the first two days of the operation all reporters were barred from the island, getting no closer than a Navy carrier stationed two miles off Grenada's coastline. It was not until President Ronald Reagan had addressed the nation on television with a stirring victory speech that a limited amount of reporters, arranged in a pool, finally set foot on Grenada, too late to cover the action that had occurred

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<sup>130</sup>Peter Young (Ed.), Small Wars and Insurgencies: Defense and the Media in Time of Limited War (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1991), 169.

<sup>131</sup>Goebel, 4.

<sup>132</sup>Gergen, 58.

during the brief conflict.<sup>133</sup> This ban on coverage allowed the military to operate without public scrutiny, which had haunted many military leaders since Vietnam two decades earlier.<sup>134</sup>

NBC reporter John Chancellor was appalled at the military's denial of access to Grenada. He said:

It is not only the privilege of the American press to be present at moments of historic importance, it is the responsibility of the press to be there. The men who died in the invasion of Grenada were representing values in American life; one of those values is the right of the citizenry to know what their government is doing. That principle, of the press as an observer and as critic of the government, was established at the beginning of the United States. It is the responsibility of all citizens to uphold it.<sup>135</sup>

Surprisingly though, the majority of the American public was supportive of the military's control of the media during Operation Urgent Fury. A *Los Angeles Times-Mirror* poll conducted Nov. 12-17, 1983, of 1,006 adults showed that 52 percent approved of press limitations in Grenada and another 47 percent approved of excluding the media until the mission was achieved.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>Sharkey, 15.

<sup>134</sup>David Stebenn, "The Military and the Media," in Craig Lamay (Ed.) The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict, A Report to the Gannett Foundation (New York: Gannett Foundation Media Center, 1991), 15.

<sup>135</sup>Qtd in James Brown, 13.

<sup>136</sup>"Grenada's Media Coverage: Public Opinion Poll," Los Angeles Times-Mirror (November 12-17, 1983).

### The Sidle Panel

Because of the treatment in Grenada, American media as a whole were livid and demanded that corrections be made for the future. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John W. Vessey Jr., convened a panel in 1984 headed by retired Army Gen. Winant Sidle, the former chief of public affairs for the combined U.S. services in Vietnam from 1967 to 1969, to study the censorship problem and review ways to improve the military's media policy for future operations.<sup>137</sup> The commission was composed of 14 retired military officers and journalists who worked together for nine months in Washington, D.C., to recommend solutions.<sup>138</sup> In August 1984, the Sidle Commission released its report, defining rules designed to ensure a place for media on the battlefield of all future American conflicts. The report, which included eight recommendations, began with the statement, "It is essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and the safety of U.S. forces."<sup>139</sup> It highlighted that an adversarial relationship between military and media was "healthy," since the American public was better served receiving its news from both sides of the fence.<sup>140</sup> The eight

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<sup>137</sup>Braestrup, Battle Line, 9.

<sup>138</sup>Richard Halloran. "Pentagon issues new guidelines for combat zones." The New York Times (August 24, 1984), A1.

<sup>139</sup>Halloran, A1.

<sup>140</sup>Sharkey, 16.

recommendations included:

1. Public affairs planning should begin as soon as operational planning starts.
2. When it becomes apparent during operational planning that pooling the media is the only way to offer them early access to the battlefield, the pooling should be as large as possible and last for the shortest time necessary.
3. The Secretary of Defense should look at the possibility of creating a constantly updated media accreditation list that would serve as a national pool notification list.
4. Media members should expect to comply with ground rules determined by the military during operational planning. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from further coverage of the operation.
5. Planning should include sufficient equipment and qualified people to assist reporters in covering the action adequately.
6. Planners should carefully consider media communications requirements and make them available to reporters during the operation.
7. Planning should include consistent transportation for the media in and around the theater of operation.
8. Media-military understanding and cooperation can be improved through regular meetings, media attendance at military schools, and military commanders' visits to news organizations.<sup>141</sup>

The most significant action of the Sidle Commission was the formation of the Department of Defense (DOD) National Media Pool, which was implemented to guarantee limited media coverage during the early phases of an operation while still trying to ensure operational security.<sup>142</sup> In September 1984, 10 media organizations

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<sup>141</sup>"Panel's report on the military and the press," The New York Times (August 24, 1984), A6.

<sup>142</sup>Pascale Combelles-Siegel, The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today (Washington: Strategic Studies Institute, 1996), 6.

were notified they would be the initial members of the newly created pool.<sup>143</sup> The basic principles for members of the national pool included:

1. Those participating in the pool agree to share all information and products with media outside of the pool.
2. Reporters must obey escorts' orders and not break away from the pool.
3. There can be no communication with their organizations and they can only file stories through military equipment.
4. They must follow pre-established ground rules.
5. They are subject to security review.
6. They are expected to ask for media opportunities.<sup>144</sup>

The creation of the national pool was expected to alleviate further problems regarding media access to the battlefield. In hindsight, Kennedy said the media should have known better:

Anyone innocent enough to believe that such an aggregation [as the Sidle Commision] was going to make it easier for the press to cover a war should not be permitted out of the house unescorted. It was a measure of the press's disarray that it (sic) swallowed the commission's remedy [of a pool system] hook, line, and sinker.<sup>145</sup>

#### Panama - Operation Just Cause

While the media pool worked effectively during minor military exercises from 1985 to 1989, its first "real-world" activation proved to be less than a success. On

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<sup>143</sup>Combelles-Siegel, 10.

<sup>144</sup>"DOD National Pool Ground Rules," DOD National Medial Pool Deployer's Information Package (December 1993).

<sup>145</sup>Kennedy, 115.

Dec. 21, 1989, U.S. forces invaded Panama in an attempt to unseat and arrest its president, Gen. Manuel Noriega, and the media pool was activated to report on the action.<sup>146</sup> Flown from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla., to Panama City, Panama, the 12-member pool arrived four hours after the invasion began. According to John Bascom, a pool reporter for ABC Radio, the group spent the first day and a half watching CNN's coverage from inside a hangar at the air base and being helicoptered to areas where no actual fighting was taken place. He remarked, "I didn't have a whole lot to report. It was tremendously frustrating."<sup>147</sup> The U.S. government later admitted it was a mistake not to let reporters accompany troops into battle, but said the formation of the pool was not intended to stop reporters from covering the action.<sup>148</sup>

The media in Panama were not allowed to film U.S. casualties or damaged equipment such as helicopters and they could not take video of Panamanian prisoners.<sup>149</sup> The small amount of video that was filed was restricted by a lack of planned transport for film materials back to the United States. In fact, the first video images, given to the military for transport on Dec. 22, did not arrive in the United

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<sup>146</sup>James Warren, "In first battlefield test, media pool misses mark, The Chicago Tribune (January 7, 1990), C1.

<sup>147</sup>Qtd in Warren, C1.

<sup>148</sup>Warren, C1.

<sup>149</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 206.

States until two days later.<sup>150</sup> According to authors Hudson and Stanier, what American viewers were treated to was “pictures of American soldiers running or driving up and down festively decorated Panamanian streets with buildings burning or gutted in the background, apparently wrecking Christmas for the unfortunate inhabitants.”<sup>151</sup>

#### Hoffman Report

The extent to which the media was controlled in Panama is laid out in a 1990 Defense Department-sponsored report written by Fred Hoffman, a former DOD official and Associated Press reporter. In it Hoffman revealed that President George Bush doubted the pool’s ability to maintain operational security and left it up to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney to control the situation, which he did by calling up the pool late.<sup>152</sup> Cheney told Hoffman his biggest concern was for the “maximum security possible to avoid compromising the operation and to preserve the element of surprise.”<sup>153</sup> Hoffman concluded in his report that Panama “illustrates how the perception of the pool’s purpose has become skewed since it was established in the wake of the Pentagon’s ill-advised denial of news reporting access to battles

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<sup>150</sup>James Brown, 15.

<sup>151</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 207.

<sup>152</sup>Fred Hoffman, Review of Panama Pool Deployment (Washington: Department of Defense, 1990), 4.

<sup>153</sup>Hoffman, 7.

on...Grenada.”<sup>154</sup> He wrote the media pool was undone by a lack of proper planning and execution, as well as “an excessive concern for secrecy.”<sup>155</sup> He made several recommendations, most of which reiterated what the Sidle Commission had reported more than five years earlier. Tim Russert, NBC’s Washington bureau chief at the time, summed up his Panama experience, “We showed we [the media] could keep a secret. Now, the military has to demonstrate that they’ll let us in to cover the story.”<sup>156</sup>

By now, electronic new gathering was being replaced by satellite news gathering (SNG), which featured lighter equipment, including satellite transponders that extended the range of live coverage around the world so long as the reporter could secure an uplink, which proved to be a problem in countries with antiquated telecommunications networks.<sup>157</sup> SNG gear, known as flyaways, could be packed into a dozen carrying cases for shipment around the world.<sup>158</sup>

#### The Gulf War - Operation Desert Storm

The next military conflict arrived less than a year later with the start of Operation Desert Shield in Saudi Arabia in August 1990. The 17-member media pool was initially called up because the Saudi Arabian government was slow to issue visas

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<sup>154</sup>Hoffman, 8.

<sup>155</sup>James Brown, 15.

<sup>156</sup>Qtd in Warren, C1.

<sup>157</sup>Murrie, 98.

<sup>158</sup>Murrie, 98.

to individual reporters, but the pool was quickly disbanded when visas were completed. Soon thereafter hundreds upon hundreds of international reporters stormed into Saudi Arabia.<sup>159</sup> In January 1991, after Iraq refused to exit Kuwait despite the presence of United States-led multinational Allied forces in Saudi Arabia, the Allies began Operation Desert Storm, an all-out attack on the Iraqi military structure.

Many people remember Desert Storm as the first American conflict that featured live television coverage. Reporters like CNN's Charles Jaco and NBC's Arthur Kent became household names as they reported live from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, warning of incoming Scud missile strikes and outgoing Patriot missile defenses.<sup>160</sup> Reporter Ken Clark said, "[Because of live coverage] in the Persian Gulf, an Iraqi Scud missile explodes simultaneously in a Tel Aviv neighborhood and in the American living room."<sup>161</sup> The first days of the air war featured CNN reporters Bernard Shaw, Peter Arnett and John Holliman giving blow-by-blow accounts over a satellite-linked cellular telephone of American aircraft striking targets inside the Iraqi city.<sup>162</sup> Day after day, Americans tuned in to CNN to hear and sometimes see how the war was going. It has been estimated that an average of 600 million people

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<sup>159</sup>Sharkey, 17.

<sup>160</sup>Neuman, 213.

<sup>161</sup>Ken L. Clark, "A gift of satellite technology: instant war," Broadcast News (October 7, 1991).

<sup>162</sup>Neuman, 213.

worldwide watched the news nightly as events happened.<sup>163</sup> Because of satellite uplinks and improved equipment, broadcast reporters were often able to tell the story of the war with no delay. As author Neuman pointed out:

The advent of live coverage ... meant a real-time clock on war. The audience could form its own views on a reporter's daring or veracity, on an expert's batting average or a Patriot missile's accuracy. Viewers had a rare opportunity to form their own opinions based on raw footage broadcast live.<sup>164</sup>

American reporters could report from Dhahran and Riyadh because American forces were permanently stationed there for the course of the war. Where they could not go to was the Kuwaiti desert, where the ground fighting was going on, as well as Baghdad, except for CNN's Peter Arnett who reported from Iraq's capital throughout the conflict. Williams said, "It was a hard thing to cover the air war, because you could cover the planes taking off and you could cover the planes landing, but you couldn't cover the most interesting part ... because it was happening somewhere else. In fact, it was happening in Iraq or in occupied Kuwait."<sup>165</sup> A few reporters managed to skirt military handlers, however. CBS' David Neal and Bob McKeown were able to get into Kuwait City ahead of the U.S. military forces. Setting up a satellite uplink from their truck, they broadcast live interviews with Kuwaiti citizens directly back to

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<sup>163</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 224.

<sup>164</sup>Neuman, 214.

<sup>165</sup>Pete Williams, "A Gulf War Military-Media Review," Defense Issues (March 14, 1991), p. 7.

CBS headquarters in New York.<sup>166</sup> Most broadcast media were not so fortunate.

There were two main reasons for the media's animosity. The first was the military did not allow open coverage as the recommendations of both Sidle and Hoffman had suggested and the U.S. government had agreed to adhere to. Instead, reporters typically were escorted in groups and ran into transportation and communications problems because the military was ill-equipped to handle the approximately 1,600 accredited reporters in the Persian Gulf, many of whom were inexperienced as military journalists.<sup>167</sup> Like in Vietnam, the Defense Department placed restrictions on what the media could report including:

1. Publication or broadcast of specific information DOD wanted kept secret, including number of troops, type of aircraft, weapons, equipment and supplies.
2. Future plans and operations, locations of forces, and tactics.
3. All combat reporting was done using pools or groups of reporters, whose work was subject to security review before it was released.
4. No reporters were allowed to move freely in combat zones as they had in Vietnam.<sup>168</sup>

The Associated Press' Patrick Sloyan warned that the public was getting a government-controlled version of hostilities because of the pool restrictions.<sup>169</sup> Those

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<sup>166</sup>Whiting, 66.

<sup>167</sup>Sharkey, 17.

<sup>168</sup>Bob Woodward, The Commanders (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 368.

<sup>169</sup>Arant and Warden, 24.

reporters who chose to go against the rules and instead operate outside of the escorted groups were often shunned or ejected from military units.<sup>170</sup> Although the groups were not technically pools since the reporters did not have to share information with each other, the results were the same. It provided the military with a means to control the flow of reports going out regarding the operation. Reporters were assigned to units they had no interest in or missed out on opportunities for great stories. Army Capt. William Brown, a public information officer in Saudi Arabia at the time, said, "While the pool has been used very successfully to provide coverage of key events that would go uncovered if it were not for the military transporting pools to the appropriate location at the correct time, the control of access in all areas creates the impression that the military has something to hide."<sup>171</sup>

Secondly, there was not nearly enough transportation or communications equipment to serve the overwhelming number of journalists covering the conflict. During the four-day ground war, the military used a "pony express" system for getting broadcast reporters' footage and reports back to the United States, using vehicles and helicopters to shuttle reporters' products from the battlefield to Dhahran, whereupon military personnel would review the products before transmitting them to Washington.<sup>172</sup> This shuttle process proved less than reliable, however. According to

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<sup>170</sup>James Lemoyne, "A correspondent's tale – Pentagon's strategy for the press: good news or no news," The New York Times (February 7, 1991), E3.

<sup>171</sup>James Brown, 16.

<sup>172</sup>John Fialka, Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 5.

the DOD's 1991 Title V report to Congress, only 21 percent of reporters' products made it to Dhahran in less than 12 hours during the ground war, while 69 percent made it in less than two days, meaning that most of the stories filed were after the fact and useless.<sup>173</sup> According to *U.S. News & World Report*, "News reporters assigned to cover Desert Storm were no match for the machine of the U.S. Central Command and the Pentagon... There was virtually no way to circumvent the restrictions imposed by the military."<sup>174</sup>

After the war, the media again made their concerns heard. In a protest letter to Secretary Cheney in June 1991, 17 media organizations collectively wrote:

Our cooperation in Pentagon pool arrangements since the Sidle Commission has been based on an understanding that pools would provide emergency coverage of short duration. Clearly, in Desert Storm, the military establishment embraced pools as a long-term way of life. The pool system was used in the Persian Gulf War not to facilitate coverage, but to control it.<sup>175</sup>

Despite the media's concerns, the American public once again felt strongly that controlling the media during Operation Desert Storm was a good idea. In a national *Los Angeles Times-Mirror* public opinion poll taken Jan. 28, 1991, nearly 80 percent of 750 adults surveyed thought news censorship by the military in the Middle East

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<sup>173</sup>Fialka, 5.

<sup>174</sup>"Triumph Without Victory: the Unreported History of the Persian Gulf War," *U.S. News & World Report* (New York: Times-Random, 1992), 413.

<sup>175</sup>Hedrick Smith, The Media and the Gulf War: The Press and Democracy in Wartime (Washington: Seven Locks, 1992), 378.

was acceptable.<sup>176</sup>

### Somalia

All of the most recent armed conflicts involving the United States can be classified in the category of military operations other than war (MOOTW), primarily situations concerned with peacekeeping or humanitarian purposes. Edwards remarked:

Peacekeeping and low intensity conflict offer new challenges to the military in forging a meaningful and effective relationship with the media ... It must be acknowledged that the media is (sic) now an integral part of the operation, to be influenced and molded.<sup>177</sup>

Because so few ground troops were used in these operations and the threat of physical danger to Americans was lower than in a conventional war, the military's need to control the media's movements was unnecessary. Broadcast reporters had the capability to be in the right place to report on American actions, sometimes even before U.S. forces arrived in country. Author Doug Waller wrote, "Every major U.S. military command center already has CNN blaring from a television all day, simply because the media have demonstrated they can often get to conflicts and crises faster than U.S. national security organs."<sup>178</sup>

The Defense Department's Directive 5122.5, effective March 29, 1996, committed the military to allowing "open and independent reporting" as the principal

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<sup>176</sup>"Media Coverage of Desert Storm: Public Opinion Poll." The Los Angeles Times-Mirror (January 28, 1991).

<sup>177</sup>Edwards, 49.

<sup>178</sup>Waller 324.

means of coverage for all U.S. military operations.<sup>179</sup> In limited operations since 1992, this standard has been met. Perhaps the most well-known instance of the media covering a live military operation came at the start of the Somalia operation in December 1992, when media cameras lit up the beach near Mogadishu where U.S. Navy Seals and Marines waded ashore at night. The lights and reporters gave away the troops' position and played havoc with their night-vision goggles, infuriating military officials. However, it was the military that had originally invited the media to cover the event live, hoping to spark public support for the peacekeeping operation.<sup>180</sup> The media stayed in Somalia for the next 10 months covering U.S. forces attempting to restore order to the beleaguered nation. However, U.S. media had left the country two weeks before the October 1993 firefight between Army Rangers and Somali militia that left 18 Americans dead. It was left to a film crew from Toronto to show the world the footage of the dead American soldier being hog-tied and dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.<sup>181</sup>

### Haiti

The working relationship between the military and the media was "well thought out and executed" for Operation Restore Democracy in Haiti, according to Lt. Col. Goebel.<sup>182</sup> The plan was for U.S. military forces to maintain peace in Haiti while

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<sup>179</sup>DOD Directive 5122.5, 6.

<sup>180</sup>Goebel, 12.

<sup>181</sup>Adamson, 24.

<sup>182</sup>Goebel 13.

ousting its leader, Gen. Raul Cedras, and placing the exiled former president, Rene Aristide, back in power.<sup>183</sup> The military had arranged for a media pool to enter the country on Sept. 17, 1994, so they could be ready to provide coverage of a paratrooper assault if it occurred. The AP's Wolman noted, "We [the media] were satisfied with the arrangements the Pentagon was able to make. It looked as if it could have been a successful combat pool."<sup>184</sup> Reporters were assigned to individual units and received classified briefings before the planned invasion. Sharkey, a former *Washington Post* reporter, was pleased with the changes in the military system, "The pool was given classified information by high-ranking officials. Other than an embargo until the start of the invasion, there were no restrictions on what we could report or how we could report it."<sup>185</sup> Hours before the air attack, an agreement between the two nations was reached and the media pool was called down.

Still, major steps were taken regarding how the media would cover an armed conflict. Pentagon public affairs officials had met with broadcast media representatives in Washington prior to the conflict to discuss protocol for television coverage.<sup>186</sup> All major U.S. television networks agreed to use night-vision devices on

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<sup>183</sup>John Shalikashvili, "Humanitarian Missions Challenge Military and Media," DefenseLink [Online], Available <HTTP://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1995/s199500504-shali.html> (November 10, 1999).

<sup>184</sup>Debra Gersh-Hernandez, "Press Pool Was Ready to Go," Editor and Publisher (September 24, 1994), 9.

<sup>185</sup>Jacqueline Sharkey, "The Shallow End of the Pool," American Journalism Review (December 1994), 44.

<sup>186</sup>Gersh-Hernandez, 10.

their cameras during the planned coverage of the night assault and would delay their broadcasts until the troops were safely on the ground.<sup>187</sup> However, the media would not agree to a one-hour delay of broadcast video, nor did they heed the military's advice to stay in hotels or at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince until the streets were made safe. The media's united response was that they "would take care of themselves."<sup>188</sup>

#### Kosovo/Bosnia

The United States was involved in peacekeeping affairs in the former Yugoslavia from 1993 to 1999. The world's broadcast media were there for the duration and showed graphic images of civilians slaughtered on the streets, bombed out marketplaces, mass grave sites, and fighting between rag-tag armies scurrying through the hilly countryside. Reporter Paul Moorcraft referred to Bosnia as "the first true TV war. Lightweight cameras proliferated among soldiers, victims, voyeurs and reporters."<sup>189</sup>

Perhaps the most compelling live television coverage during the conflict came when the BBC's Martin Bell reported from Ahmici, a small Muslim village, in 1993. He went on camera after British soldiers found an entire family slaughtered in their home, apparently at the hands of Croatian militia. The footage did not spare

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<sup>187</sup>Shalikashvili.

<sup>188</sup>Gersh-Hernandez, 10.

<sup>189</sup>Paul Moorcraft, "CNN – the new emperor of international politics?" The New Zealand International Review (August 1997), 6.

sensitivities, showing the bodies strewn about in the family cellar.<sup>190</sup> Hudson and Stanier remarked that the “immediacy of the pictures and the brutality of the killing drove home to the watching world the intensity and cold-blooded cruelty of the conflict.”<sup>191</sup>

At the height of the Kosovo conflict, CNN had 70 people in the region, and the other big U.S. networks devoted enormous resources as well.<sup>192</sup> While the broadcast media still relied on military officials for information on hostile activities and troop locations, they moved around Sarajevo, Belgrade and other areas with no restrictions from U.S. military public affairs officials.<sup>193</sup> The Pentagon had told news organizations there would be no pool system for Bosnia since the country was already “swarming with reporters who probably knew more about the territory and the conflict than the American troops coming in.”<sup>194</sup> The only restrictions came from Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, who repeatedly expelled Western journalists.<sup>195</sup> The number of dead journalists gives some idea how freely the media were able to move about – nine international journalists and media workers lost their

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<sup>190</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 287.

<sup>191</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 287.

<sup>192</sup>Michael Evans, “The real battle for war reporters,” The London Times (October 29, 1999), 3.

<sup>193</sup>Edwards, 47.

<sup>194</sup>Waller, 324.

<sup>195</sup>Felicity Barringer, “A New War Drew New Methods for Covering It,” New York Times (June 21, 1999).

lives covering the civil wars.<sup>196</sup>

### **Television's Impact on Foreign Policy**

There are those who argue the power of the broadcast media to highlight situations around the world drives the U.S. government to extend or withdraw foreign military aid. Author Carl Builder said:

The Cable News Network (CNN) now appears to be more pertinent than the CIA for current White House intelligence. The significance of CNN to the White House is that it represents the information which is in the hands of the public and which must be reckoned with by the political elites. CNN can, by default, set the political agenda.<sup>197</sup>

This so called "CNN Factor" claims the media have the potential to influence policy through its ability to broadcast events live.<sup>198</sup> Reporters both inform and misinform the public, bringing viewers into the decision cycle of policymakers in Washington.<sup>199</sup> For example, the footage of the dead soldier in Somalia has been credited with forcing Congress to call for the withdrawal of American troops from that operation.<sup>200</sup> Only four months later, all U.S. forces had left Somalia.<sup>201</sup> On the flip side, Walter Rodgers asserted that news coverage from CNN and other networks "persuaded an American

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<sup>196</sup>Evans, 3.

<sup>197</sup>Carl Builder, The Icarus Syndrome (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1996), 249.

<sup>198</sup>Adamson, 9.

<sup>199</sup>Adamson, 9.

<sup>200</sup>Frank Stech, Winning CNN Wars, Parameters (Fall 1994).

<sup>201</sup>Goebel, 13.

president, if not the public, to accept the injection of 20,000 U.S. troops into the Bosnian conflict.”<sup>202</sup>

U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said:

Television’s ability to bring graphic images of pain and outrage into our living rooms has heightened the pressure both for immediate engagement in areas of international crisis and immediate disengagement when events do not go according to plan.<sup>203</sup>

Real-time reporting guarantees that both the general public and the policymakers watch the events together as they unfold. No longer is there time for government spin doctors to put the events into a more palatable package. For Neuman, “television images of war, starvation, and deprivation evoke raw emotion that put new demands on policy makers.”<sup>204</sup> Paletz said Americans now know that television pictures can “alter the content and the conduct” of foreign policy.<sup>205</sup> U.S. National Security Advisor Anthony Lake said bluntly, “American foreign policy is increasingly driven by where CNN points its cameras.”<sup>206</sup>

Others contend that even though live coverage shows what is happening, it

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<sup>202</sup>Rodgers, 35.

<sup>203</sup>Qtd in Neuman, 15.

<sup>204</sup>Neuman, 20.

<sup>205</sup>David Paletz, “Just Deserts,” in L. Bennett & D.L. Paletz (Eds.) Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (Chicago: University of Chicago), 289.

<sup>206</sup>Qtd in Adamson, 25.

should not be overstated. Author Steven Badsey wrote, "The instantaneous transmission of pictures from a war zone onto television screens remains very rare, and its impact on government policies extremely hard to demonstrate."<sup>207</sup> Likewise, author Peter Black said, "Belief in television's influence is rather like belief in life after death. Most of us would like to be able to prove it, but the evidence is inconclusive."<sup>208</sup> Hudson and Stanier argue the media's influence is not direct, rather it is the perception politicians have of its effect that can have repercussion on decisions made during the war.<sup>209</sup> Neuman said:

Those who believe that television pictures distort foreign policy argue that the visual is so potent it give too much weight to what is depicted. Television pictures do distort the debate by giving special notice, perhaps even undue notice, to what they depict. But this is the same role performed by journalism generally. International diplomacy is a stage, and journalism runs one of its spotlights ... None of thee weapons of communicate do any more than flag a problem, or focus attention. They are a lens, not a prism.<sup>210</sup>

Walter Lippmann, in his classic book *Public Opinion*, wrote, "The press ... is like the beam of a searchlight that moves restlessly about, bringing one episode and then another out of darkness into vision."<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>207</sup>Stephen Badsey, "The influence of the media on recent British military operations," in Ian Stewart and Susan Carruthers (Eds.) War, Culture and the Media (Teaneck, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), 16.

<sup>208</sup>Peter Black, The Mirror in the Corner (London: Hutchinson, 1972), 226.

<sup>209</sup>Hudson and Stanier, 303.

<sup>210</sup>Neuman, 243.

<sup>211</sup>Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion (New York: Harcourt, 1922), 226.

The debacle in Somalia is a useful example of the effect television coverage may have on an American military operation. Following President Clinton's order to withdraw troops, John Shattuck, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for human rights and democracy, said, "The media got us into Somalia and then got us out."<sup>212</sup> What tends to be overlooked is the fact that had the Clinton administration's policy in Somalia been made clear and the dangers made evident, the public would have likely supported the effort no matter the television coverage coming out of Africa.<sup>213</sup> A more pronounced foreign policy may have caused American public opinion to be strengthened following the death of American troops. Author Frank Stech stated, "The outcome of the Ranger's fight was militarily insignificant; the TV images and lack of a media plan to explain [Clinton] administration policies made the losses politically overwhelming."<sup>214</sup> Neuman pointed out, "In a different setting... the picture [of a dead soldier] might have angered the public toward staying to avenge the soldier's death. As usual, the context mattered."<sup>215</sup> The government had no clearly defined objective, much like in Vietnam, and the American people were not going to continue to put up with American troops being killed in Somalia without a solid mission to die for.<sup>216</sup> Powell opined that Americans are not opposed to seeing troops

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<sup>212</sup>Qtd in Gjelten.

<sup>213</sup>Stech.

<sup>214</sup>Stech.

<sup>215</sup>Neuman, 230.

<sup>216</sup>Stech.

give their lives, so long as it is for a cause the nation believes in:

They're prepared to take casualties. And even if they see them on live television it will make them madder ... As long as they believe it's for a solid purpose and for a cause that is understandable and for a cause that has something to do with an interest of ours. They will not understand it if it can't be explained, which is the point I have made consistently over the years. If you can't explain it to the parents who are sending their kids, you'd better think twice about it.<sup>217</sup>

### **Future Technologies**

Only a decade ago, networks covering the Gulf War provided American viewers with the first instances of live television coverage during wartime. In the past 10 years, advances have accelerated both the means and the speed of real-time video transmission. In the summer of 1999, official network Internet web sites provided up-to-the-minute details on the Kosovo conflict.<sup>218</sup> During Desert Storm, the use of computers to relay information to audiences was but a dream. Now more than ever, technology exists to allow people at home to become, according to ABC's Koppel, "violence voyeurs."<sup>219</sup> Viewers are able to see more than they ever have before and they become jaded by the speed and access to information.<sup>220</sup>

New technologies such as the Internet and civilian satellite imagery are giving television networks an opportunity to expand their live coverage of armed conflicts, allowing viewers additional means to access wartime information. Access to the

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<sup>217</sup>Qtd in Livingston, 298.

<sup>218</sup>Barringer.

<sup>219</sup>Barringer.

<sup>220</sup>Barringer.

battlefield has extended into both cyberspace and outerspace.

### The Internet

Americans everyday log on to the Internet and watch live events such as women giving birth, sex shows, football games, classroom lectures, and so forth. It is not far-fetched to imagine video coverage of armed conflicts being seen live on the Internet in the near future.

News organizations now carry full staffs of on-line journalists whose sole job is to feed their audiences a steady diet of the latest news and information. Included in this Internet packaging are audio and video coverage of events around the world. CNN, ABC, NBC, and CBS are funneling news, pictures, video, audio and graphics 24 hours a day.<sup>221</sup> CNN alone has 110 people solely dedicated to making CNN.COM a success.<sup>222</sup> While reporters used to have to wait for a television news programming slot to go on the air live, now they can do it through the Internet.<sup>223</sup> Viewers do not have to rush to a television set to catch breaking news. They can access it right on their computers, from work, at home, even in their cars. Matthew Winkler of *Bloomberg News* said, "The appetite for information on a real-time basis is growing. So there has to be something esthetically that appeals to the reader of a great newspaper or magazine but needs the staccato delivery of a real-time news

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<sup>221</sup>James W. Crawley, "Net hums with news about war," The San Diego Union-Tribune (March 30, 1999), A8.

<sup>222</sup>Felicity Barringer, "Narrowing the Electronic News Gulf," New York Times (June 7, 1999), C14.

<sup>223</sup>Barringer, C14.

service.”<sup>224</sup> News Internet sites are answering that call. University of Missouri journalism professor Dean Mills stated, “The Web is making us rethink the way we do journalism – newspapers, TV and radio.”<sup>225</sup>

For the professional broadcast reporter in the next conventional war, ABC’s Dunsmore predicted a two-person team would be able to work with little more than a digital camera, a wide-band cellular telephone to uplink to a satellite, and a laptop computer to coordinate the transmission.<sup>226</sup> The digital footage would be available for live broadcast on either television or the Internet.

It is conceivable that nontraditional journalists, essentially anyone with a little capital to spend on start-up equipment, could establish their own web sites and provide live video streams from war zones. As ABC’s Koppel said, “[The] definition [of television network] can now be applied to any individual with a few thousand dollars and a desire to put video material on the Internet.”<sup>227</sup> Portable cameras such as the \$10,000 digital video Camcutter allow one-person news crews to shoot and edit their footage. A briefcase-sized satellite receive/send unit then transmits the digital signal to a web site for instant viewing.<sup>228</sup> Even better, if the person has access

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<sup>224</sup>Barringer, C14.

<sup>225</sup>Crawley, A8.

<sup>226</sup>Dunsmore, 237.

<sup>227</sup>Ted Koppel, “Foreword,” in Joe S. Foote (Ed.) Live from the Trenches (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 1998), viii.

<sup>228</sup>Stephen D. Isaacs, “Have Newsroom, Will Travel,” Columbia Journalism Review (September 1995).

to a phone line, the digital video can be transmitted over the line using store and forward systems, albeit at rates slightly slower than real time.<sup>229</sup> Reporter Stephen Isaacs said, "Anyone who wants to [can] buy a portable newsroom, go out and cover X and, without having to check in with the gods of journalism in Atlanta or New York, go directly to air with ... whatever."<sup>230</sup>

But journalists such as Peter Brown foresee problems associated with an overload of live information. He said:

The press should understand that too much live coverage becomes a mindless – even mind-numbing – exercise in speculation. The press needs to display more self-restraint, adopting a more measured and routine format when it blankets sensitive military operations. Give both the military and the audience some breathing room. Why so much instant imagery, and so little substance.<sup>231</sup>

Likewise, Koppel is wary of the influx of pseudo-reporters clamoring for attention on the Internet. He wrote, "The provider [of Internet footage] may be an isolated person or an organized group. To the extent that video images can be edited or altered, the consumer has nothing by which to gauge the value of the information that is being conveyed."<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>229</sup>Murrie, 101.

<sup>230</sup>Isaacs.

<sup>231</sup>Peter Brown, 63.

<sup>232</sup>Koppel, viii.

### Commercial Satellite Imagery

Former ABC News producer Mark Brender said during testimony before Congress in 1996, "Precise pictures from space will revolutionize television news, both by freeing reporters from relying solely on government-provided information and by freeing viewers from relying solely on what reporters tell them."<sup>233</sup> The advent of commercial satellite imaging has made it possible for broadcast media to show photos and report stories anywhere in the world. Satellites orbiting hundred of miles above the earth's surface have replaced the cameraman on the ground in many instances, with their ability to look down into forbidden areas and capture the story for the evening news. Brender hypothesized about the advantages an imaging satellite would give a television network:

If right now, China is moving forces toward Taiwan – it's about to do a large scale military exercise – we [the media] would like to be able to see it. We can't now. With one-meter resolution, we could observe from an orbiting camera the extent of China's military movements, especially at airfields. That would have news value.<sup>234</sup>

Imaging satellites can photograph vast areas of the earth's surface, producing resolutions of anywhere from 80 meters down to one meter. Two imaging companies, Space Imaging Corporation and Earth Watch Incorporated, own satellites capable of one-meter resolution, providing clear black-and-white images of objects as

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<sup>233</sup> "Testimony of Mark Brender before the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, July 24, 1996," Available HTTP: [www.fas.org/spp/civil/congress/1996\\_h/h960724b.htm](http://www.fas.org/spp/civil/congress/1996_h/h960724b.htm).

<sup>234</sup> Debra Gersh-Hernandez, "Eyes in the Sky," Editor & Publisher (April 27, 1996), 52.

small as park benches and sports cars.<sup>235</sup> During armed conflicts, troop formations and aircraft placement will be easily discernible.<sup>236</sup> Alvin and Heidi Toffler predict,

Commercial satellites will make it almost impossible for combatants to hide from the media, and with all sides watching the video screen, instant broadcasts from the battle zone threaten to alter the actual dynamics and strategies in war.<sup>237</sup>

For the standard commercial rate of between \$500 and \$1,500 for a timely color image, mass media organizations have found it a bargain to be able to finally see inside forbidden places and show it to the world.<sup>238</sup> Additionally, access to images is becoming easier because of electronic commerce over the World Wide Web. Imaging companies all have their own web sites, so all customers have to do is to find the high-resolution image they want, pay for it with a credit card, and have it delivered to their computer through electronic mail.<sup>239</sup>

The technology is such now that an imaging satellite revisits and photographs the same location once a day, allowing for same-day delivery of photographs,

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<sup>235</sup> "QuickBird 1 Specifications: Orbital Information," EarthWatch [Online], available <HTTP://www.digitalglobe.com/company/spacecraft/quickbird.html>.

<sup>236</sup> Goebel, 17.

<sup>237</sup> Toffler, 172.

<sup>238</sup> Vago Muradian, DoD may increase consumption of commercial satellite imagery, Defense Daily (February 11, 1997), 214.

<sup>239</sup> Powell III, C.A, Satellite Imagery: The ethics of a new technology, Journal of Mass Media Ethics (Spring 1998), 96.

depending on the satellite's location at the time of the crisis.<sup>240</sup> However, the speed and number of satellites continues to increase, making it conceivable that networks would be able to use live photographs from satellites in future newscasts. Currently, media organizations can have one-meter resolution photographs within 18 hours, as opposed to the old standard of 2 to 15 days, according to John Neer, Space Imaging's chief operating officer and president.<sup>241</sup> Neer said, "For emerging current events, the availability of timely data, accurate information, and this high-resolution content data is really what the media will principally benefit from."<sup>242</sup> He stated that imaging companies even have the ability to retask satellites to cover a particular area of interest for more expediency of information.<sup>243</sup>

### **Summary**

The last two decades have brought about many changes for broadcast media organizations during wartime, arguably none greater than the ability to provide live coverage to viewers. As the relationship between the media and the military has slowly improved since Grenada, so too has television's ability to get news of armed conflict out faster to viewing audiences. What does the next 20 years hold for broadcast media and their relationships with the military during armed conflicts? The second half of the thesis examines what direction that relationship is headed.

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<sup>240</sup>Quickbird 1.

<sup>241</sup>Gersh-Hernandez, 52.

<sup>242</sup>Gersh-Hernandez, 52.

<sup>243</sup>Gersh-Hernandez, 52.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

The key to any study of value is to query knowledgeable persons well versed on the research topic. In this case, the effectiveness of this thesis hinged on interviews with two separate study groups: (1) broadcast media representatives from national television networks with extensive experience in covering U.S. military operations; and (2) military public affairs representatives with varying levels of experience, all of whom have been active in various phases of U.S. military operations and have interacted regularly with broadcast media. In interviewing the two groups, the author was able to compare and contrast viewpoints from opposite sides of the spectrum – the broadcast media seemingly desiring full access to military operations accompanied by extensive live coverage, and the military wanting to protect U.S. military assets and contain the media through official procedures. Through this process, the author was able to ascertain how far apart the two sides were in terms of agreeing on the need and effect of live coverage during armed conflict.

As stated in Chapter I, the research questions for the study include:

1. Technological advancements have permitted real-time television reporting from the battlefield. How have the broadcast media and military adapted? Have guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the broadcast media regarding live coverage?
2. What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is a violation of this sort?
3. Television has the power to expose injustices and turn attention to causes not in the public light. Does live reporting from a war zone have the power to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the military? What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of U.S. service members being injured or killed?
4. New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored into media coverage of military conflicts. What concern is there that people may use the Internet to exploit information captured live on the battlefield? What effect might the broadcast media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage?

### **Research Design**

Interview questions were designed to address each of the research questions, with some questions overlapping other research areas. A separate interview agenda was developed for each of the two groups (See Appendices G and H). The study required slightly different interview agendas since the experiences of members of the two groups varied in relation to the topic. For example, media personnel were queried about guidelines within their organizations regarding live coverage during armed conflicts, something most military members would be unaware of. Most of the questions, however, were the same, making the design useful to compare the answers of each group for each question.

### Research Question 1: Live Reporting

Technological advancements have permitted real-time television reporting from the battlefield. How have the media and military adapted? Have guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the media? Is there a concern that some reporters may endanger lives by violating ground rules?

Conflict after conflict has shown wide gaps in agreement between the media and the military regarding what the media should have access to and how information should be broadcast without review. Many times during the last two decades, the two sides met to write guidelines that both could work by satisfactorily. Department of Defense Directive 5122.5 contains the closest thing to a mutually acceptable plan the two groups have agreed on yet. The regulation states the military shall grant "open and independent coverage" to the media whenever possible. The directive clearly permits live reporting during armed conflicts, raising the issue of whether real-time broadcasts should be, or can be, controlled at any time during U.S. military operations. This issue was assessed through the following questions:

- How has real-time television coverage impacted media/military operations during war?
- Have solid ground rules been agreed upon between the military and broadcast media for conduct during wartime?
- What guidelines, if any, does your organization have in regards to live reporting from a conflict area? (*question for media members only*)
- Have military public affairs guidelines adequately addressed the media's capability of real-time coverage from a war zone? (*question for military members only*)
- Is there a concern that some broadcast reporters may endanger lives by violating established ground rules? Why or why not?

### **Research Question 2: Operational Security**

What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is a violation of this sort?

During military operations there is a fine line to be toed between the American media's rights of a free press and the military's need to control information on the battlefield to provide safety to troops and assets. The media admittedly has no desire to compromise U.S. military troop safety through live reporting, but the very practice of it could unknowingly undermine U.S. operations during war, resulting in the loss of lives or materiel. The military takes a fervent stand that it will take strong measures to ensure broadcast media do not directly cause friendly casualties through untimely reporting. This issue was assessed through the following questions:

- What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security?
- Could live reporting possibly affect the outcome of an operation?
- What steps should be taken if broadcast media are found to have compromised the safety of friendly forces?
- Should the military have the right to deny media the right to report live from the battlefield? Why or why not?
- How big a concern is it to the media/military that live television coverage could provide intelligence data to the enemy?
- Does real-time coverage give an accurate picture of what is happening during a military operation, or does it lead to sensationalism and simplification?

### **Research Question 3: Foreign Policy**

Television has the power to expose injustices and turn attention to causes not in the public light. Does live reporting from a war zone have the power to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the military?

This issue was assessed through the following questions:

- Does the media have the ability to influence the U.S. government to make or change foreign policy regarding U.S. military operations strictly through coverage?
- What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of U.S. service members being injured or killed? Would there likely be foreign policy changes because of it? Why or why not?

### **Research Question 4: Emerging Technologies**

New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored in to media coverage of military conflicts. What concern is there that people may use the Internet to exploit information captured live on the battlefield? What effect might the media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage?

The Internet has provided an avenue for journalists who otherwise would not have a forum for their ideas. The 'Information Superhighway' guarantees a voice for people so long as they have access to a web server. Anyone with a digital camera and the ability to download to a web site can transmit images of any number of events.

The advent of live video streaming has enabled millions of people to view images of events once reserved for movies and television.

Commercial satellite imaging has improved to the point that now anyone with a credit card can download photographs taken from space with one-meter clarity. Broadcast media have used this technology to show wartime atrocities after they

happened and to demonstrate the wartime capability of U.S. adversaries. Some people think it is only a matter of time before satellites are able to shoot live video and transmit directly via the Internet or national news networks.

The author assessed this issue through the following questions:

- Internet sites now feature live video streaming from anywhere in the world. What concern is there that the Internet may be used to transmit live war footage without guidelines?
- What added benefits has the Internet provided to media organizations in regards to real-time information of military operations? (*question for media members only*)
- How might the broadcast media's use of high-resolution satellite photographs change the landscape of wartime coverage?

### **Research Procedures**

The author conducted telephone interviews with both media representatives and military members. The interview subjects were selected for one of the following reasons: (1) the interviewee was a professional colleague of the author; (2) the author encountered the subject's name during research for the study; (3) the interviewee was known to have extensive broadcast media experience during military operations; or (4) the interviewee was recommended to the author by members of the military or media. All interviewed subjects were selected because of their experience and familiarity with the topic. No one was chosen based on his or her anticipated opinions of live coverage during armed conflicts. The telephone interviews were based on the availability of the subjects and each averaged 30 minutes in length. One subject responded to interview questions through electronic mail.

## The Study Groups

### The Broadcast Media Representatives

All members of the broadcast media were chosen because of their experiences covering U.S. military operations. The experiences of the members range from the Vietnam War to Operation Allied Force in Kosovo.

**Jim Clancy** is an anchor and correspondent for CNN International based in Atlanta. With CNN since 1981, he has been assigned to CNN's London, Rome, Beirut and Frankfurt bureaus. He filed stories from Lebanon on the siege of Tripoli, the Israeli bombardment of West Beirut and the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in 1984.

**Marcia De Sonne** is the director of technology assessment for the National Association of Broadcasters. In this capacity, she examines the progress and future developments of the broadcast and other related industries. She has written several books on these subjects.

**Dean Hovell** is a senior operations producer at *ABC World News Tonight*. Prior to that, he was a senior producer with ABC News, and has covered military operations in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo.

**David Martin** is *CBS News'* national security correspondent. He has covered foreign policy issues from the Pentagon for 18 years, first with *Newsweek*, and then with CBS since 1983.

**John McWethy** is *ABC News'* chief national security correspondent. He has reported on military and diplomatic aspects of U.S. foreign policy from the Pentagon

in Washington, D.C., since 1983. McWethy has covered military operations in Kosovo, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Liberia, Somalia and Haiti.

**Jim Miklaszewski** is *NBC News'* Pentagon correspondent. He joined NBC in 1985 and has also served as its White House correspondent since 1988. Before joining NBC, Miklaszewski was a national correspondent for CNN where he covered armed conflicts in Lebanon, El Salvador and the Falkland Islands.

**Carl Rochelle** is a general assignment correspondent for CNN's Washington, D.C., bureau. A former CNN Pentagon correspondent, he headed the Department of Defense media pool that went to Saudi Arabia in August 1990 for Operation Desert Shield. Prior to joining CNN in 1983, Rochelle was with ABC News for 12 years.

**Rick Sallinger** is a news reporter for Denver's KCNC-TV. As a correspondent with CNN's London bureau from 1990 to 1993, he covered military operations in the Persian Gulf, Somalia and Bosnia.

**Perry M. Smith** is a special consultant for CBS Radio, MSNBC and *U.S. News and World Report*. A retired Air Force major general, Smith was CNN's chief military analyst from 1991 to 1998 and is author of *How CNN Fought the War* and other works.

**Garrick Utley** has been a national reporter for CNN's New York bureau since February 1997. He has nearly 40 years experience as a network correspondent, beginning with *NBC News* in 1963. At *NBC News*, Utley served as the network's chief foreign correspondent from 1982 to 1987, and has reported from more than 70 countries.

The Military Public Affairs Representatives

Member of the military study group were selected because of their experience in dealing with broadcast media, primarily during U.S. military operations. The military experience of the 10 interviewees range from 26 years to eight years.

**Colonel Don Black** is the director of public affairs for both the U.S. and Air Force Space Commands at Peterson AFB, Colo. A 29-year veteran, he has been involved in military operations in Grenada and the Middle East, as well as appearing before the Sidle Commission in 1984.

**Colonel Virginia Pribyla** is the director of public affairs for the U.S. Pacific Air Forces Command at Hickam AFB, Hawaii. She has 25 years of experience and has directed media activities for major military operations including Operations Desert Storm, Provide Promise, Support Hope and Deny Flight.

**Lieutenant Colonel Barbara Carr** is the deputy director of public affairs for U.S. Air Forces in Europe at Ramstein AB, Germany. During her tenure, she helped direct U.S. Air Force media operations in Bosnia and Kosovo.

**Lieutenant Colonel Jay DeFrank** is the chief of the Air Force Media Operations Division at the Pentagon. A 25-year veteran, he coordinates media activity for the Air Force with all the major U.S. television networks. DeFrank served as the director of public affairs for 17<sup>th</sup> Air Force at Sembach AB, Germany, during the Persian Gulf War.

**Lieutenant Colonel Matt Durham** is the deputy director of public affairs for Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB, Colo. A 19-year veteran, he previously

was director of public affairs for Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Fla., and was involved in media activities with Operations Desert Storm, Restore Hope and Uphold Democracy.

**Lieutenant Colonel Vic Warzinski** is an Air Force media officer at the Department of Defense press desk at the Pentagon. An 18-year veteran, he most recently has assisted in media activities in military operations in Liberia, Bosnia and Kosovo.

**Lieutenant Colonel (Select) Joe Lamarca** is the chief of media relations for U.S. Central Command at MacDill AFB, Fla. A 16-year veteran, he has served a tour of duty in South Korea and supported media operations in Somalia, Haiti and Kosovo.

**Major Tracy O'Grady-Walsh** is the chief of public affairs for the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph AFB, Texas. An 11-year veteran, she was the chief of public affairs for the 31<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing at Aviano AB, Italy, from 1995 through 1997, and interacted heavily with international media since the base was the staging ground for U.S. military deploying to Bosnia.

**Captain Adriane Craig** is a master's degree candidate at Arizona State University in Tempe. An eight-year veteran, she previously served as the chief of public affairs for the 62<sup>nd</sup> Airlift Wing at McChord AFB, Washington.

**Captain Patrick Ryder** is the chief of readiness and evaluation for Air Force Public Affairs in the Pentagon. An eight-year veteran, he has been the chief of public affairs for the 48<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing at RAF Lakenheath, England. He has supported

several military operations, including Provide Comfort, Northern Watch, Joint Endeavor and Allied Force.

### **Limitations of Research Approaches**

The availability of potential interview subjects was a factor in who was interviewed. The author would like to have interviewed several media representatives who were recommended to him through various channels, but several of them, including CNN's Jamie McIntyre, were either unavailable or refused an interview. Additionally, a few high-ranking Air Force officials were unavailable for an interview during the period of research.

Time constraints on the author prevented him from conducting the interviews in any scientific order. Instead, the interviews were completed based on the availability of each subject.

### **Research Design Limitations**

The broadcast media representatives are mostly comprised of reporters affiliated with national television networks. Therefore, the voice of the regional reporter or freelancer is not heard in this study. Additionally, most of the subjects hail from the Washington, D.C., area, and are extremely familiar with and, thus perhaps skewed by, the wealth of military information acquired weekly from Pentagon sources. However, because all are vastly experienced in live television coverage of military operations, the author felt it necessary to interview as many of them as possible. Those reporters without live television experience during wartime were not considered vital to the core of the study.

The lack of women included in the media representatives is also noteworthy.

Attempts were made to interview Christiane Amanpour of CNN and Sheila McVicar of *ABC News* without success. This would have raised the number of female journalists interviewed to three. However, the broadcast media sampling is highly indicative of the representation of reporters who routinely cover military operations.

Finally, the military study group was limited in its composition of military personnel. The group is exclusively comprised of Air Force public affairs officers. This was done because the author is an Air Force officer and the primary purpose of the study is to benefit the Air Force public affairs community.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter examines the findings from 20 interviews the researcher conducted with the broadcast media and military study groups. The ideas and opinions of the two study groups are meted out separately and then compared to try to discern how close in agreement broadcast media and military public affairs representatives are on the subject of live television news coverage during armed conflicts. The comments of each interviewee were given equal weight, regardless of the person's rank, experience or stature.

#### **The Military Representative Study Group**

##### Live Reporting During Armed Conflicts

The first research question is: Technological advancements have permitted real-time television reporting from the battlefield. How have the broadcast media and military adapted to it? Have guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the broadcast media regarding live news coverage?

Following the Grenada operation in 1983, a panel of news and military representatives gathered in Washington, D.C., and put together recommendations

designed to improve military-media relations which had hit a low point during that Caribbean operation. One of the recommendations read:

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should recommend that the Secretary of Defense host at an early date a working meeting with representatives of the broadcast news media to explore the special problems of ensuring military security when and if there is real-time or near real-time news media audiovisual coverage of a battlefield and, if special problems exist, how they can best be dealt with consistent with the basic principle set forth at the beginning of this section of the report.<sup>1</sup>

This paragraph confirms that as far back as 1983, live news coverage's impact on military operational security was a concern for senior officials of both the media and the military. Since then, operations in Panama, the Middle East, Somalia, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia have made live war coverage a reality..

The researcher found the military representatives understood that live coverage is inevitable during wartime and that plans must be worked out to accommodate broadcast media before an operation begins. Captain Pat Ryder, the chief of readiness and evaluation for Air Force public affairs, stated:

We [in the military] have to recognize that live coverage is a feature of the battlefield terrain, so you have to plan for what you're going to do if reporters do show up. Military commanders need to plan for media. This is the operating environment that we find ourselves in now. We can't just throw a big blanket over all of our operations. If you do it right and plan, there's an opportunity there where the military can get its message out [to the media] without compromising operational security.<sup>2</sup>

Other military public affairs representatives agreed. Colonel Don Black, the director

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<sup>1</sup>Directive 5122.5.

<sup>2</sup>Pat Ryder, Telephone Interview, Feb. 28, 2000.

of public affairs for U.S. Space Command, said, "What we [in the military] need to do is look at media as just another faction that we have to contend with. It's a very important faction because we have to ... have public support to successfully prosecute our war orders."<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Lieutenant Colonel Jay DeFrank, the chief of Air Force Media Operations Division, said, "We have to take live coverage into account during operational planning ... It's a fact of life, something we can't often control and have to plan around operationally in order to try and prevent it from being too harmful to our operations and forces."<sup>4</sup> He said before an armed conflict begins public affairs professionals should give guidance to operational commanders on how live media coverage may affect the operation.

Black said it is the senior military leaders who drive how much access the media will have to ongoing operations. According to Black, it is contingent on the personality of the commander in charge of the operation, and "it can be problematic if the individual is close lipped and doesn't want the media involved."<sup>5</sup>

Colonel Virginia Pribyla, director of public affairs for Pacific Air Forces, said including the media as a part of the battle plan is not an easy task for public affairs officers to accomplish. She stated:

When military planners are sitting back and planning for future conflict that might involve media coverage, it's just much more comfortable for them to assume that we're going to be able to corral the media, sort of

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<sup>3</sup>Don Black, Telephone Interview, March 6, 2000.

<sup>4</sup>Jay Defrank, Telephone Interview, February 28, 2000.

<sup>5</sup>Black.

like we did during Desert Storm. Therefore, the guidance they foist on us [in military public affairs] ends up being less than realistic, knowing what the media is [sic] capable of doing. The reality of what we will face and what we will do doesn't in large part match the public affairs guidance because the guidance is written in a much more controlled and less fevered arena.<sup>6</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Matt Durham, deputy director of public affairs for Air Force Space Command, thinks media access to war is contingent on two things. He said, "It depends on the commander's attitude and the type of operation, since ground operations are a whole lot easier to cover than air operations."<sup>7</sup>

The researcher found the question of how much access the broadcast media have to actual war operations is one the military does not take lightly. Black said the broadcast media, or any media for that matter, will naturally always want more access than the military can provide or logically should provide. He further stated:

We need to ensure that the media have the proper amount of access and [they have] the ability to gather enough information to report accurately what the situation is. If we don't give them the access, then we have no room to fault them if they don't portray things in an accurate vein from our perspective. It's very difficult for the media to get a clear picture if they don't have the opportunity to talk with people in an authoritative position to give them the correct information.<sup>8</sup>

Although almost all military members interviewed felt that live news coverage during wartime was inevitable, they had many thoughts about how best to rein in the broadcast media's real-time capability. Pribyla said:

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<sup>6</sup>Virginia Pribyla, Telephone Interview, March 2, 2000.

<sup>7</sup>Matt Durham, Telephone Interview, March 6, 2000.

<sup>8</sup>Black.

I think what we're going to have to do in the military is tighten down individual tactical security such as specific airplanes and specific missions flown by those airplanes ... but we're not going to be able to control the reporter on the ground from watching the PGM [missile] go into the Chinese Embassy [as happened in Belgrade]. We [in the military] are going to have to get out of the whine and moan stage [regarding the media] and get down to what we can do to protect those tactical issues of security and work with the media to protect the bigger strategic plans.<sup>9</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Vic Warzinski, an Air Force media officer at the Department of Defense press desk, said keeping pace with the broadcast media during wartime is a challenge because of the type of conflicts the United States has been involved with in recent years. Many times news outlets are in place ahead of the military and "the news media are much better deployed than the public affairs organization."<sup>10</sup> He said when he first went into Bosnia, CNN had already wired the military base there because it had gone in when the operation was a United Nations mission. As a consequence, the first airplanes to touch down in Bosnia were covered live on CNN.

Pribyla concurred with Warzinski, saying in many cases where the U.S. military is going to be operating in the future, where it's not an all-out military clash between two large military standing forces, the media are going to be in places transmitting where the military cannot even get to. She said the military is "going to have to learn how to adapt to them reporting our movements and unfolding events, and we're also going to have to capitalize on that coverage they do give us."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Pribyla.

<sup>10</sup>Vic Warzinski, Telephone Interview, March 3, 2000.

<sup>11</sup>Pribyla.

DeFrank noted the media are not going to agree to any control they do not have to. He said, "Media left to their own device pretty much espouse the drive-up concept of war where they get in four-wheel drive vehicles, go to the war, cover it the way they want, drive home, and file the stories as they like."<sup>12</sup>

The researcher discovered that, despite this perceived media mind set, typically before any operation begins the media agree to adhere to a set of guidelines advising them of where they can report from, what military details they can report, and when that information can be reported. How these guidelines have tempered real-time coverage is unclear. The level to which the guidelines are followed is also debated.

Major Tracy O-Grady Walsh, the chief of public affairs for the Air Force Personnel Center, said that when she was chief of PA at Aviano AB, Italy, she had success in coming to agreeable terms with most broadcast media members. She said:

With American and national-level foreign reporters we [in Air Force public affairs] typically had good agreements and great working relationships and understanding with media [during the Bosnia operation]. With the fly-by-night, Third World and some foreign media, we had no formal agreements [for media relations] and they would do whatever it took to get a picture. For the most part, they weren't always concerned with accuracy.<sup>13</sup>

Warzinski said that no matter how much the military would like the media to follow the rules set down by the military, that is not usually the case. He said there is no formal agreement between the media and the military on how a war will be covered,

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<sup>12</sup>DeFrank.

<sup>13</sup>Tracy O'Grady-Walsh, Telephone Interview, March 6, 2000.

only that the military encourages the media to adhere to DoD principles for news media coverage of military operations. According to Warzinski, whenever the military deploys a media pool, the members are at least aware of these principles.<sup>14</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Barbara Carr, deputy director of public affairs for U.S. Air Force in Europe Command, said no real agreements were formulated during Operation Allied Forces in Kosovo with the exception of media who flew on B-52 combat missions during the first night of operations. The media involved there were national reporters from the Pentagon who agreed to embargo their material until the mission was completed.<sup>15</sup>

Pribyla said broadcast media are not going to agree to guidelines that would limit their coverage during a military operation. She stated, "The media outlets, while they understand the military's desire for security, are going to always go to the side of, 'This is news, this is happening,' and I think they'll run it. It's not a matter of if we're going to reach a compromise with them to not report on those things where they obviously have the ability to do so."<sup>16</sup>

The interviews revealed most military members feel the military must trust the broadcast media to do the right thing when reporting news live from a war zone. Black said the military "has to have confidence the media are going to truly try to be objective in their reporting, but unfortunately that's not always the case, either

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<sup>14</sup>Warzinski.

<sup>15</sup>Barbara Carr, Electronic Mail Response, February 17, 2000.

<sup>16</sup>Pribyla.

because the reporter already has some slant they're trying to portray or the parties involved [in the war] are trying to manipulate the media to draw public support to their side.”<sup>17</sup>

DeFrank was adamant that, when push came to shove, most media could be trusted to cooperate with military concerns. He said, “In my 21 years of dealing with media in a number of these [wartime] situations, I have yet to encounter a single media person who, when told directly that something they have ran the very real risk of compromising lives, and you explained to them how, they have always 100 percent of the time complied.”

Lieutenant Colonel (select) Joe Lamarca, the chief of media relations for U.S. Central Command, said:

The military is only going to get burned one time [by the media] and then that organization is going to be very limited to what they're going to have access to in the future, and they know that. So I don't think they're going to bite off their nose to spite their face. It's not necessarily worth it to get one story and risk never getting another one.<sup>18</sup>

O'Grady-Walsh agreed. She said, “The media are going to do whatever they want, but the ones who are truly committed to their country and to their profession are going to do the right thing for the right reasons. Those who do are going to continue to have great relations with the military.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Black.

<sup>18</sup>Joe Lamarca, Telephone Interview, March 2, 2000.

<sup>19</sup>O'Grady-Walsh.

### Impact on Operational Security

The second research question is: What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live news reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is a violation of this sort?

The researcher found the military's chief concern with live news coverage during wartime operations is its potential impact on operational security. The chance that coverage could reveal tactics, strategies, troop locations, aircraft or ship positions is something the military dreads. While some military leaders would prefer to shut the media out altogether, as was done in Grenada, that is not the reality of war today.

Pribyla said the days when the military could control the media's ability to report from the battlefield are all but over. She stated:

I don't think we're ever going to be in a position where we're going to be able to shut the media out like we [the military] did in Desert Storm. That was an unlikely scenario that will never happen again. You had repressive regimes we were fighting with that were able to keep the media out before, during and after the war, but try doing the same thing in Central Europe ... or East Timor right now. There is no way that U.S. forces or the U.N. are going to tell CNN they can't go and report on the operation there. For our future conflicts, there aren't any physical situations [I can think of] where we'd be able to restrict them again.<sup>20</sup>

Since broadcast media are going to be present at future military operations, the military must have plans for what to do if live television coverage compromises operational security.

Ryder cited a recent event during the Kosovo operations that exposed the

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<sup>20</sup>Pribyla.

threat live news coverage poses to American forces. He said:

CNN called us [at RAF Lakenheath in England] and wanted to come out and cover our jets taking off for Italy as a show of force. There were several things we had to think about. One of them was that these guys want to go live and we didn't want them reporting our planes taking off at 3:54 Eastern Standard Time, due to arrive at such and such a time, so we had to make an agreement with them that they could come out, but couldn't use the footage until the following day when the planes had arrived [in Italy]. So it [live reporting] speeds up information flow to everyone, and that includes the enemy.<sup>21</sup>

Durham said any time a video camera is present during war, the reality of the situation is changed. He said, 'People react differently than if the camera wasn't there, either good or bad. You get some of these 19- or 20-year-olds who want to be seen on camera and they might do something they wouldn't have done if the camera wasn't there. They may get themselves or somebody else killed.'<sup>22</sup>

The researcher found that denying the media from reporting live from a war zone when it clearly could endanger lives is something almost all military members agreed on; however, they do not think it is always possible or easy to accomplish.

DeFrank stated:

If there is serious evidence that it [live reporting] is endangering the lives of Americans or is likely to result in American deaths, I think the military should have the right to [deny media from live coverage], but I don't think they will have the right to, and that's the other side of it. I don't think they can stop it ... It would be great to have that control, but I think we have to accept that we don't have that control.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ryder.

<sup>22</sup>Durham.

<sup>23</sup>DeFrank.

Black said, "Live coverage gets to be a real touchy thing. The TV folks will argue their First Amendment rights. I'm certainly a believer in the Constitution, but I also believe there are times media may be present in a situation that, if they aired things live, they could jeopardize many lives, their own as well as troops."<sup>24</sup> Ryder noted:

I think there are some cases where the military should be able to deny live coverage. However, we as military members need to recognize there are situations where it's going to be impossible to do that, especially when you're flying airplanes over public lands. I can deny the media from coming on my base, but I can't deny them from filming off base. In certain situations, it would be our responsibility to U.S. or allied forces to deny media coverage.<sup>25</sup>

Air Force Captain Adriane Craig concurred. She said if the coverage is going to endanger lives and that reason is spelled out clearly to the media, then the media should not have the right to broadcast that information until the information has been declared safe.<sup>26</sup> However, Pribyla stated the only way media will not broadcast information is if they do not have it to begin with. She places the responsibility of controlling wartime information squarely on the shoulders of the military.

She said:

I think every commander in the U.S. military today would say that if media coverage threatened [even] one individual's life, then they can't do it. The reality is live coverage has never gotten anybody killed except reporters. Live coverage of our operations in Kosovo didn't give anybody any tactical warning and it didn't foreshadow what we were going to do ...

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<sup>24</sup>Black.

<sup>25</sup>Ryder.

<sup>26</sup>Adriane Craig, Telephone Interview, February 28, 2000.

I don't think live coverage threatens our operations because the military is able to control those tactical bits of information like airplanes and pilots. That kind of information isn't going to be shared during a live interview.<sup>27</sup>

A couple of interviewees cited the Gulf War as an operation that could have been severely compromised had broadcast media used live news coverage from the battlefield. Black said, "If television outlets had been with our troops on the ground during Desert Storm and gone live, then they may have exposed operations that weren't previously known [to the enemy]."<sup>28</sup> Durham stated:

We did our famous Left Hook [during Desert Storm] where we moved all of our troop and tanks 50 miles to the west [of Iraq]. All it would have taken is one reporter up there going live saying, 'I don't know what's going on, they won't tell us but I do see a lot of trucks and tanks moving to the west.' We know Saddam Hussein monitored those kinds of things [on television]. In reporting news, the media would have become real-time intelligence gatherers and that really worried a lot of people at the Pentagon during that phase of the operation.<sup>29</sup>

Carr said that "any live reporting can have an effect [on military operations] in that it removes or, at the very least, complicates the element of 'surprise', long accepted as a key element to conduct(ing) the art of war."<sup>29</sup>

The researcher found that what steps, if any, the military might take if live news coverage was found to have compromised operations or lives is not clear. The most common response among those interviewed was for senior military leaders to simply speak with the head of the responsible news outlet and voice their displeasure

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<sup>27</sup>Pribyla.

<sup>28</sup>Durham.

<sup>29</sup>Carr.

with the situation, hoping to prevent a recurring problem. However, Black said the military has yet to face that dilemma, but knows it is possible. He stated:

My experience with most legitimate reporters is that if you present a rational argument on why they shouldn't go live, then they won't. Now, if that fails, and TV goes live with a story that would lead to additional deaths, then I think we [in the military] have an obligation to decide what is the proper thing to do. Preempt the signal to deny their ability to broadcast or allow it to go forward? That's a real difficult decision to make because, once you start that, then censorship is not too far behind and I'm not a believer in censorship.<sup>30</sup>

Warzinski said the military has to work with the media whenever they endanger troops. He added, "There's only so much you can do with respects to a free press within our society. Hopefully if we're providing support to the media during the operation, we'll come to an understanding. If the media don't understand that, then we can yank their credentials, we can make them persona non grata on our installations or we can refuse them further support."<sup>31</sup>

While most military members are quick to confirm that real-time reporting can in some cases give immediate intelligence data to U.S. adversaries, some of the military representatives interviewed conceded that live news coverage can have a positive effect on operations. While giving away military intelligence data is considered poor protocol during most armed conflicts, some coverage can actually serve to de-escalate a situation, according to a few interviewees. Durham said, "In Haiti we used media coverage to our advantage. The media kept showing pictures of

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<sup>30</sup>Black.

<sup>31</sup>Warzinski.

the 82<sup>nd</sup> [Airborne Division] loading up and we got the Haitians to surrender just by the TV coverage showing all of our stuff moving down.”<sup>32</sup> DeFrank cited Operation Desert Fox against Iraq as a positive example of live coverage. He said, “[CNN’s] Christiane Amanpour was commenting each time a weapon struck and talking about the location and the type of impact on live TV as it was unfolding. Of course, that’s intelligence value to the opposition, but it’s also intelligence value to us. It certainly let us know how accurate we were being; let us know if we had hits.”<sup>33</sup>

#### Influence on Foreign Policy

The third research question is: Television has the power to expose injustices and turn attention to causes not in the public light. Does live reporting from a war zone have the power to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions regarding the military? What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of U.S. service members being injured or killed?

The author found the majority of military respondents felt strongly that television news reports have a great influence on how and where the U.S. government decides to use military force. Several military representatives cited the fact that media coverage shortens the decision-making process for policymakers, forcing them to act quickly on whether to deploy U.S. forces to a region. Durham said, “It’s called ‘Foreign Policy By CNN.’ During Somalia, there was a lot of pressure that we had to go in and save this place from themselves, then we got in this big firefight ... and the

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<sup>32</sup>Durham.

<sup>33</sup>DeFrank

headline was ‘What are we doing over here?’ The media absolutely influenced our foreign relations.”<sup>34</sup> Craig echoed that sentiment, saying, “The media have a great impact on where the military goes to next. For example, President Clinton merely mentioned the crisis in Rwanda after seeing images on television and [U.S. military] planes were flying there before an official order was even given. It’s that kind of media coverage that can drive foreign policy.”<sup>35</sup>

DeFrank elaborated on the media’s effect on foreign policy and the government’s media-driven pressure to react to hot spots around the world. He said:

Media coverage certainly compresses the time for [foreign policy] decision-making and that’s one effect. Double-guessing public reaction to events and the need to act or not is another. It affects operationally how things are executed [during armed conflicts]. Look at the whole aspect of collateral damage, civilian casualties, precision weapons, our procurement system, and what we’re demanding from technology. The need to intervene in Kosovo is a prime example. What was driving it? Media discussions about genocide.<sup>36</sup>

A few military representatives clarified that the media influence foreign policy mostly because they shine a light on certain world regions and not others. Ryder said:

In some cases, the media have given rise to America’s policy of interventionism. When you’ve got [CNN’s] Christiane Amanpour from Afghanistan showing people getting messed up, while the same thing is going on unreported in [the country of] Georgia, the public demands that we do something [in Afghanistan] because of the media coverage and we end up committing resources. Somalia and Kosovo are good examples.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup>Durham.

<sup>35</sup>Craig.

<sup>36</sup>DeFrank.

<sup>37</sup>Ryder.

Durham stated:

It kind of depends where the camera is. When Rwanda was going on, there were more people dying in the Sudan than in Rwanda, but there just happened to be cameras in Rwanda. So we got pictures of Rwanda and there was pressure to do something to save them. You can read about it and it's one thing, but you see it and it's another thing. You see people dying and suffering [on television] and there's a natural desire to do something about it ... The military ends up being the dreaded world policeman, going from firefight to firefight, to places like East Timor.<sup>37</sup>

Black said the reaction of the American people to the television images was an important factor whenever the U.S. government has to make a decision for the military to intervene or not. He said, "If the public receives information via the media and forms an opinion about an event or operation, then I think they have an obligation to let their elected officials know if they support it or don't support it."<sup>38</sup>

The author found a few military representatives who were skeptical of the direct role broadcast media play in influencing foreign policy. Warzinski believes most Americans are not inclined to pressure decision-makers to form a policy unless there is an obvious need for intervention. He said, "The level of media influence on foreign policy is often overstated. There's a lot of apathy in the American public, people who don't care what's going on. Foreign policy is reflective of the national leadership reception to that sort of stuff. If you find you're doing the right thing, media coverage doesn't make a difference."<sup>39</sup> O'Grady Walsh concurred, saying, "To

<sup>37</sup>Durham.

<sup>38</sup>Black.

<sup>39</sup>Warzinski.

this day, I don't think Americans as a whole are thrilled that we're doing these far-reaching operations. Much of the coverage gives a negative slant to it. They are not the ones demanding we take action."<sup>40</sup>

As for Americans' ability to handle live coverage of American forces being killed or injured, the author found the military representatives to be split on what effect it would have on public support. Some clearly thought it would have a devastating effect on the ability to continue that operation. Durham stated:

The American people can't understand why when one million-man army goes up against another million-man army, there are casualties. It's certainly easier to read about the D-Day invasion than to watch *Saving Private Ryan* ... The public doesn't want to see our dead troops on television. If Saddam Hussein had inflicted more casualties [during Desert Storm] who knows if the war would have been as popular ... Military operations by definition are messy and people don't like messy.<sup>41</sup>

Black felt that Americans have become intolerant of war casualties because recent conflicts have produced very few American deaths despite the millions of troops involved over time. He said, "If we had a situation in Kosovo where ... we had a number of people killed, I'm not sure Americans would have supported that effort nearly as strongly as they did."<sup>42</sup> He went on to add that "death is a part of war and it's foolish of us to try to exclude that [from television news coverage], but we need to work with the media on how it's presented ... TV certainly plays a big part in the

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<sup>40</sup>O'Grady-Walsh.

<sup>41</sup>Durham.

<sup>42</sup>Black.

emotions of something of that nature.”<sup>43</sup>

Carr said that during the recent Kosovo campaign “a number of the [United States’] Allies expressed concern that we would pull out if we started losing American airmen.”<sup>44</sup> Because of this fear of public reaction, DeFrank said the Defense Department will not permit media coverage of any flag-draped caskets coming into Dover AFB, Del., because “they’re concerned that coverage of casualties returning home will affect the public’s willingness to support an operation.”<sup>45</sup>

On the other hand, the author found those who disagreed that Americans would turn their support against a military operation when Americans troops began dying. DeFrank said, “I think the concept that coverage of Americans being killed is likely to sap public support is probably fallacious. If not, it is a factor, but it is not a deciding factor as to how important it is [for armed forces] to be there.”<sup>46</sup> Lamarca said Americans would support any operation as long as “the cause is right.” He added, “The American public will support their sons and daughters fighting to defend this country. However, if they don’t believe in the cause, i.e. Vietnam, then I don’t think they’re going to accept seeing soldiers killed on television.”<sup>47</sup>

Pribyla’s thoughts were along the same lines. She said, “The people who say

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<sup>43</sup>Black.

<sup>44</sup>Carr.

<sup>45</sup>DeFrank.

<sup>46</sup>DeFrank.

<sup>47</sup>Lamarca.

Pribyla's thoughts were along the same lines. She said, "The people who say that America can't stomach casualties are harkening back to Vietnam ... The American public is not going to stomach a war of attrition to where we keep feeding America's sons and daughter to it, but they will stand up and support ... the side of the right."<sup>49</sup> Ryder agreed, saying:

There's a couple of things that could happen if the public witnessed death on television. First, you could have people demand that we withdraw [from the operation], but I think that would happen only if it was a mission we didn't believe in. Second, it could reinforce America's desire to stay engaged and that would happen if the general public and our leadership believed in the mission. It really depends on the situation. Unfortunately, in a lot of the humanitarian operations we're doing, there's either not a lot of knowledge about it in the American public or there's apathy, or we as a nation don't really care about the issue. Then suddenly we see people getting killed and I think there is a knee-jerk reaction by our leadership to say, 'Pull 'em out,' when the situation might be better suited to stick it out.<sup>50</sup>

Pribyla used a hypothetical situation to explain why Americans would be able to accept wartime casualties today. She stated:

Put yourself in Korea. South Korea gets attacked by the North. American soldiers, like everybody else in South Korea, are being killed right and left. There are enough media in Korea to where there would be live pictures coming out of there. Would the American people suddenly say, 'God, get our people out of there'? ... I don't believe so. I believe that would actually galvanize them and make their resolve stronger for us to succeed in that mission instead of withdrawing. I have a number of commanders who would probably disagree with me on that point, but I've been watching this for an awful long time and I don't think that the American public is so adverse to losing one or two Americans in the interest of liberty and freedom.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Pribyla.

<sup>50</sup>Ryder.

<sup>51</sup>Pribyla.

### Emerging Technologies

The fourth research question is: New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored in to media coverage of military conflicts. What concern is there that people may use the Internet to exploit information captured live on the battlefield? What effect might the broadcast media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage?

The author found out the Internet has already been used as a tool for gathering instant wartime information. According to Carr, the Air Force was concerned with the availability of amassed information via the Internet during Operation Allied Force. She said that "while individual pieces of information posted to various Kosovo web sites were not classified, pulled together they provided a very detailed picture of the force the Serbs were facing."<sup>51</sup> Ryder faced a situation wherein U.S. aircraft flying missions into Serbia were videotaped and shown in near real-time. He recollects:

During Allied Force at RAF Fairford [in England], a group called Tailspotters was monitoring our aircraft movements. They were one of our biggest concerns for operational security. They had a kid at the end of the runway with his scanner, watching the launches of the B-52s, transcribing the chatter from the [aircraft radios], and then posting it on the Internet while these pilots were still in flight. That's a problem. Do we consider him media? Do we consider him a spy? A hobbyist? From a public affairs standpoint, we are in a new era where the world's a lot smaller because the media is so much quicker. We need to come up with an empowerment strategy to make sure that our people are educated and know how to react around media.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Carr.

<sup>52</sup>Ryder.

A couple of military interviewees thought live wartime coverage on the Internet was a technology the military should worry about. Lamarca said:

The ability to use technology to get information from the battlefield quickly is something the media is certainly going to use to beat the other guy to the punch. The Internet is something we have to consider in our planning and have to be aware that there is always the possibility that the media is going to get stuff out quicker than we hoped they would.<sup>53</sup>

The researcher however found that almost all other military members interviewed were not overly concerned about the possibility of live footage being presented on the Internet. Warzinski stated:

I tend to think that, at least this point in time, the effect of the Internet is a bit over-rated ... You find out with the Internet that anyone can call themselves a journalist ... You can spend an inordinate amount of time on something of no significance ... I think the primary traditional media such as TV and newspapers are still dominant ... You have to recognize that 99 percent of the world does not have [access to] the Internet.<sup>54</sup>

Durham said the Internet is not a serious threat to legitimate media because it "has millions of channels. The video would have to be something spectacular to catch the public's attention."<sup>55</sup> Pribyla said, "The Internet serves a certain part of the population but I don't think it's any more threatening to showing what we [the military] do than television is."<sup>56</sup>

DeFrank stated the public affords little credibility to unfiltered news sources,

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<sup>53</sup>Lamarca.

<sup>54</sup>Warzinski.

<sup>55</sup>Durham.

<sup>56</sup>Pribyla.

especially the Internet. He said there is some debate whether many Internet sites should be considered news since "news involves a filter. It involves someone selectively perceiving it and pronouncing something news, whereas [video] streaming or live coverage without the reporter has no one determining it as news."<sup>57</sup>

Two military members espoused their concern the Internet could be used to wage information warfare, mainly through transmitting fake news coverage of a U.S. military operation, possibly portraying U.S. forces as heavy-handed and non-humanitarian. Black said:

You could have an [adversarial] organization ... go out and shoot video of atrocities they have just committed and put that on the Internet and portray that as the results of a Coalition bombing campaign. Who knows what the facts are? Nonetheless the video is there and it's showing an atrocious scene claiming the Coalition is doing these horrible things. That's something that we as a country need to take a hard look at how we're going to counter that.<sup>58</sup>

Pribyla agreed, saying, "The use of the Internet to misrepresent or manipulate what it is we're doing and how we're doing do it ... is much greater than it ever would be with the television networks ... because they have an editorial process that ensures some level of accuracy and the Internet doesn't have that."<sup>59</sup>

Another emerging technology broadcast media are using to show war footage is commercial satellite imagery. Although this technology cannot yet produce real-time photographs, the sheer number of satellites launched and the increased orbital

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<sup>57</sup>DeFrank.

<sup>58</sup>Black.

<sup>59</sup>Pribyla.

velocity of them continue to speed the process.

The author found that the majority of military representatives saw satellite imaging as just another media resource to contend with during military operations, but not something to be too concerned with at this point in time. Warzinski said it is "just one more tool" the media uses in this age of "proliferation of information."<sup>60</sup> Durham thinks the broadcast media are going to use satellite technology more and more as soon as they figure it out a use for it during wartime.<sup>61</sup> Lamarca said news organizations using satellite technology have to "use common sense and judgment" if they are going to use it to show space images of the battlefield.<sup>62</sup>

One military member who did voice concern over the media's broadcasting of satellite images was Black. He said:

The media can get outstanding imagery from these commercial space assets and could present a problem to a U.S. or Coalition military operations ... If live TV [organizations] had been with the Army as they were planning the invasion into Iraq [during Desert Storm] and they had used the [satellite] imagery that's available [today], then that's providing intelligence information to an enemy and putting lives in jeopardy. Of course it could also work to our advantage too. If the media are putting imagery live [on television] that could show that a bad guy is massing forces or atrocities have been conducted against a population, then that could build public support demanding that we [the U.S. military] do something to counter that.<sup>63</sup>

He believes, like many of the others, the media are not overly concerned with the

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<sup>60</sup>Warzinski.

<sup>61</sup>Durham.

<sup>62</sup>Lamarca

<sup>63</sup>Black.

ramifications of using the satellite imagery, only that it serves to inform the public of the ongoing operation.

### **The Media Representative Study Group**

#### Live Reporting During Armed Conflicts

Many in the media group said the reason live news coverage is so prevalent during conflicts today is the sheer improvement in broadcast technology, allowing for real-time transmissions to be logically possible. Only in the last 10 years has it been possible for a reporter to go live without carrying a full-blown news studio and crew with him. CNN anchor Jim Clancy said, "We have had a drastic change in technology. Twenty years ago when I was covering [the war in] in Beirut, it would take an 18-wheeler truck to put up a live shot. Today I can put up a television station in the field comfortably from the back of a station wagon or a pick-up truck. Instantly I'm broadcasting from the battlefield."<sup>64</sup> CNN correspondent Carl Rochelle said, "In the early days, live coverage was something you did more for show than anything else. It took a microwave unit and you could only go a certain distance from your home station. It didn't happen very often and it was incredibly expensive. The portable satellite uplinks began to revolutionize that."<sup>65</sup>

One obvious effect of providing live news coverage during wartime is that it enables the American public to gain intimate details of the ongoing operation. Many of the correspondents interviewed stated that was one of the biggest impacts live

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<sup>64</sup>Jim Clancy, Telephone Interview, March 22, 2000.

<sup>65</sup>Carl Rochelle, Telephone Interview, March 22, 2000.

television coverage has had. MSNBC's Perry Smith said, "It allows people who are really interested in the war to follow it fairly closely and not wait a day or two to find out what's going on."<sup>66</sup> CBS' David Martin agreed, citing live coverage from the Gulf War as an example. He said, "The best live stuff I've ever seen was the day the Marines went into Kuwait and CBS had [correspondent] Rob McEwen up there. That just gave the liberation of Kuwait a meaning and a reality that you just wouldn't get if it weren't live."<sup>67</sup>

The researcher also found many media members were concerned that, during live coverage, reporters often sacrifice accuracy and context because of the incomplete picture they are painting for their viewers. Basically, what you see is what you get. This was not entirely unexpected based on some of the research findings in Chapter Two. Rick Sallinger of KCNC-TV in Denver said:

In any situation when you're doing live reporting as opposed to after-the-fact reporting, you don't have the chance to gather the information. You deliver it instantly and so the chances of inaccuracy are greater and the chances of not having perspective or depth are much greater, too. But there's a trade-off. You have the immediacy in exchange for those other possible drawbacks.<sup>68</sup>

Smith offered an example from a recent operation, saying, "There are opportunities for certain events shown on live TV to be taken out of context or blown out of proportion. Coverage in Kosovo showed footage that made it look like there was a

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<sup>66</sup>Perry Smith, Telephone Interview, March 6, 2000.

<sup>67</sup>David Martin, Telephone Interview, March 2, 2000.

<sup>68</sup>Rick Sallinger, Telephone Interview, March 2, 2000.

lot of bombing of civilians, when in fact very few civilians were killed in that war [by Americans bombing].<sup>69</sup> ABC's John McWethy recalled a specific incident that misled viewers on the severity of the Haiti operation. He said:

I was walking down the streets of Port-au-Prince and things were relatively quiet on that day. There was one warehouse that was being looted by Haitians and there was a crowd outside that was participating in all of this. There was also a live CNN operation going there where they had their cameras focused on it and they had their correspondent on top of a truck beaming back live pictures and doing the commentary ... The picture that one got from that live, unfiltered view of the warehouse was a city in a state of utter chaos that was uncontrollable. The truth of the matter was that Port-au-Prince was very quiet that day. There was one incident happening and there was one live camera on the one bit of activity that was going on and that was the picture the United States was getting at that moment ... [It was] very distorting.<sup>70</sup>

NBC News' Jim Miklaszewski noted:

Many times you can only report what you know at the time, and that may not always be truthful or accurate. When you're put in that position, you go to great pain to explain that this is all happening very quickly, this is only what we know so far, we continue to look into these things, etcetera ... and when reporting on foreign capitals, especially those of adversaries, we always put the disclaimers on that the information we are receiving is under tight government control, etcetera.<sup>71</sup>

A couple of reporters felt the problem with misinformation and poor reporting often was caused by reporters who head off to military operations without any military knowledge or combat experience. McWethy said one of the greatest difficulties the government faces during an armed conflict is when news organizations

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<sup>69</sup>Smith.

<sup>70</sup>John McWethy, Telephone Interview, March 8, 2000.

<sup>71</sup>Jim Miklaszewski, Telephone Interview, February 28, 2000.

flood a military theater with general-assignment reporters. He said, “[They] don’t know an F-16 [fighter jet] from an M-1 tank. That becomes dangerous especially when they’re out in the field. They don’t know what the rules are, don’t know what the tactics are, [and] don’t realize when they are divulging information that is detrimental to the operation.”<sup>72</sup>

For the most part, broadcast media representatives thought live coverage was dictated by where the reporter was at the time as well the images he or she could get. Sallinger thought live coverage was dictated by what country or region the conflict was taking place. He said, “In Kosovo … it was very difficult to go live from different locations given the geography and politics. I know in Bosnia we weren’t allowed to bring in our own uplinks as we were during the Gulf War in Saudi Arabia. We had to rely on Yugoslav television to feed our material out of there, so that gave them the control over our [media] operations.”<sup>73</sup> McWethy recalled how live news coverage in the Gulf War was more effective when the reporter covered active events with vivid images rather than static news briefings. He said, “Live coverage from Riyadh [Saudi Arabia] is a whole different ball game than live coverage from the battlefield. In Riyadh we’re just barfing out the results of the military briefings. That’s very different than being at the front lines.”<sup>74</sup>

One surprise finding was that many reporters felt live coverage benefitted

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<sup>72</sup>McWethy.

<sup>73</sup>Sallinger.

<sup>74</sup>McWethy.

rather than compromised the U.S. military in many ways. Martin stated, "I think live television has been to the military's benefit. You certainly have heard all the stories that on the first night of Desert Storm, their best intelligence on what was being hit in downtown Baghdad was coming off the tube."<sup>75</sup> McWethy noted that "sometimes we [in the broadcast media] can provide the command authority with information that they can't get themselves ... Frequently I find that when I'm in a [war] zone I can provide the commanders with things they don't know."<sup>76</sup> Rochelle related a story from the Gulf War, saying, "The former head of the CIA said after the war that the way they kept the White House apprized of Scud missiles was they would call and tell them a Scud had been launched and advise them to turn on CNN to see where it was going. There's benefit [from live coverage] for everyone."<sup>77</sup>

As for how much access the broadcast media have to war zones, most of the reporters thought the military still had the upper hand in controlling media in the combat theater. Martin said, "The military learned from Vietnam that never again will reporters be allowed to roam the battlefield unescorted. That's something that reporters are always going to chafe at."<sup>78</sup> Miklaszewski noted, "When it's to an individual commander's advantage to deny access, they're going to do it every time.

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<sup>75</sup>Martin.

<sup>76</sup>McWethy.

<sup>77</sup>Rochelle.

<sup>78</sup>Martin.

I don't like it, but I understand it.”<sup>79</sup>

One media representative felt the military was slowly losing control of the media during wartime, but would likely never allow full access to media. Smith said:

The media would like always to have more access and more live stuff and the military will always try to constrain them particularly in order to not give away operational security on missions about ready to go down. So there will always be that tension, but with each passing war in the future the media will have more access because they'll have their own satellite photography and maybe even their own helicopters and airplanes flying around. The media will become more and more intrusive into the day-to-day operations of the war, but they'll never get a complete picture nor will the military ever give complete cooperation.<sup>80</sup>

The author found that although the military has basic media guidelines for combat operations, some media members felt that agreeing on how live news coverage will be conducted is neither possible nor healthy. CNN's Garrick Utley said, “In Vietnam, there were ground rules everyone followed where reporters wouldn't disclose unit designations or movements until the battle was over. That worked because the coverage was past tense. Now the news is reported instantaneously and reporters do not always have a complete picture of what's going on.”<sup>81</sup> Miklaszewski said the idea of the media and military agreeing to terms about how a conflict is to be covered has no efficacy. He stated:

A free media in a democratic society should not be entering into any covenants with the government because it can lead to public mistrust. If the public turns to the media to find out what's going on in the government

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<sup>79</sup>Miklaszewski.

<sup>80</sup>Smith.

<sup>81</sup>Garrick Utley, Telephone Interview, March 7, 2000.

as opposed to getting it straight from the government, it's up to us to keep our distance. It doesn't mean that the government and the media or the military and the media do not cooperate on certain stories or events.<sup>82</sup>

The author found the majority of the reporters thought the best solution the broadcast media and the military could come to was to develop mutual trust and respect for each other, trying better to understand how each operates during military operations. Utley said, "I don't see [reporting news live from a war zone] as a very big problem. Understanding between the military and the media can go a long ways toward dealing with all of these problems because no journalist is eager to make a scoop that's going to danger friendly forces."<sup>83</sup> McWethy said:

One of the most effective ways the military has in the past controlled [the media during war] is to cut us in on what's happening. When a news organization knows that they now know the plan and they are duty-bound not to report it, it puts us on an entirely different plane and a different set of negotiations. I find the military is almost always willing to let veteran reporters, who have shown they only have their integrity as negotiating capital, see the way that they conduct war in one fashion or another.<sup>84</sup>

Clancy said, "Journalists are willing to coordinate [on coverage] with the military to a certain extent."<sup>85</sup> As an example, Miklaszewski said it is standard practice at his news organization to not report a live story that may harm U.S. operations. He said:

In both Desert Fox and Allied Force, we at NBC knew in advance almost down to the minute not only when air strikes would start but when the first missiles would impact. But we didn't use that information; we sat on it. We

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<sup>82</sup>Miklaszewski.

<sup>83</sup>Utley.

<sup>84</sup>McWethy.

<sup>85</sup>Clancy.

used the information internally to be able to prepare ourselves to report events as soon as we could after they happened. That was with no explicit agreement with the U.S. government. It was just our own self-imposed responsibility not to interfere with an ongoing military mission when it could either endanger the mission or lives.<sup>86</sup>

#### Impact on Operational Security

The author found all of the media representatives had no desire to ever compromise military operational security through live reporting. However, knowing when they were endangering forces was often difficult to determine, given the confusion of war coupled with live reporting. David Martin said, "If you've got stuff that would clearly jeopardize lives, most people would think hard before they put that on the air, but the trouble is information that might jeopardize lives doesn't necessarily hit you in the face right away; there are second- and third-order consequences."<sup>87</sup> Then he added, "If there's a marginal element of risk [associated with live reporting] then it's worth the higher principle [of the First Amendment]."<sup>88</sup> Sallinger related back to his experience with CNN during the Gulf War, saying:

One of the things we were criticized for was that because of our live coverage capability we were able to broadcast attacks immediately. For example, when the Iraqis would fire a Scud missile at Saudi Arabia, we could say that the missile just hit and this is where it hit, so CNN came into some criticism for providing intelligence information to the Iraqis. I think after that criticism we were more careful not to broadcast information that would provide information to the opposing side.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Miklaszewski.

<sup>87</sup>Martin.

<sup>88</sup>Martin.

<sup>89</sup>Sallinger.

The researcher found the media representatives almost unequivocally opposed to the idea of the military denying live reporting from a war zone. McWethy could not envision a situation in which a media blackout would be imposed during a military operation. Martin said:

I don't think live reporting has impacted in ways the Pentagon feared. I thought that when this subject of being able to go live from a backpack came up, it was always [from the military's standpoint] in the context of the compromise of operationally important information and intelligence for the enemy. But in all the years I've heard that discussed I've heard of only one case that might fall into that category and that was during Desert Storm ... on the first day U.S. aircraft were flying out of the [Incirlik Air] Base in Turkey ... there was a CNN crew watching them take off from outside the base and I've heard people say that the Iraqi radar lit up. I frankly am very skeptical of that because I'm not sure what the Iraqis' ability to watch television was at that point.<sup>90</sup>

Three media representatives said that, under extreme circumstances, the military should have the right to deny live coverage of a combat operation. Clancy said, "It's possible the military will have the right to deny the media to broadcast live. I think certainly when it's in their strategic interest and in the interest of the safety of their troops, they can deny it."<sup>91</sup> Rochelle said, "I can see a situation where that would be done. I think it's something that should be worked out between the media and the military though ... There should be good reasons for [the military] saying no [to live coverage]."<sup>92</sup> Utley stated:

You could argue that if you're in a combat situation in which there's

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<sup>90</sup>Martin.

<sup>91</sup>Clancy.

<sup>92</sup>Rochelle.

censorship from the military's point of view for tactical reasons, then I could see a camera being denied from showing a battle or some troop movements ... I think it would be justified [to deny live reporting]. That would come under the umbrella of not disclosing the movement, vulnerability or designation of forces as the battle is proceeding.<sup>93</sup>

Still no one could point to any past incidents that would have warranted a media blackout. Martin said, "As I remember the stories from the Kosovo operation, the only real security breaches were the fact that pilots were talking in the clear and that had nothing to do with reporters being at the end of the runway ... All of the meaningful security breaches were the military's own and not anything the press did."<sup>94</sup>

Media representatives offered a simple solution for dealing with broadcast media found to have compromised military security and safety during combat – the military should meet with the television network and discuss the breach to try to prevent future violations. Smith said, "The senior leadership in the military should go to the senior people in the various media organizations who have violated this [safety of friendly forces] and tell them directly that what they did was wrong and cost U.S. lives. That's very likely to get attention and cause the media to be more responsible in the future."<sup>95</sup> Sallinger concurred, saying, "It should be dealt with accordingly. The military should speak with the people involved and point out to them that reporting in a certain manner could put lives in jeopardy and what can be done to

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<sup>93</sup>Utley.

<sup>94</sup>Martin.

<sup>95</sup>Smith.

avoid that. I think those conversations should take place preferably before the fact rather than after.”<sup>96</sup>

#### Influence on Foreign Policy

The media representatives were adamant that television news coverage plays an important role in shaping U.S. foreign policy on military intervention, chiefly through educating the American population on what world regions need outside assistance. Sallinger said, “Media coverage goes back to the general population and they are who elect the leaders of this country. Leaders are the ones who set the foreign policy, so when they see things happening through media coverage the public doesn’t like, they are forced to adjust accordingly.”<sup>97</sup> Likewise, McWethy said:

The media have a much more immediate influence on foreign policy. The U.S. would have never gone to Bosnia without the kind of pictures that were coming out of Sarajevo at the time. Probably similarly so in Kosovo. The saying has always been ‘editors make war.’ Now you don’t even have to worry about the editors, just throw the pictures up. The first thing that happens is the policy makers see these pictures and realize they’re going to have to respond quickly and then public opinion builds either for or against any particular position based on the kind of pictures that are coming out.<sup>98</sup>

Smith had similar thoughts, saying:

By focusing attention on certain aspects of life that’s out there, the media can tend to get Congress and people pretty excited about doing something. The best example recently was Kosovo when pictures of refugees being pumped out of Kosovo caused great concern around the world and led to an air campaign ... If the media wouldn’t have been there, the U.S. military wouldn’t have been there. They clearly played a positive role by pointing out

<sup>96</sup>Sallinger.

<sup>97</sup>Sallinger.

<sup>98</sup>Miklaszewski.

areas of atrocity that would lead to military operations.<sup>99</sup>

Martin thinks the same is true of the Somalia operation in the early 1990s. He said, "I don't think we would have been in Somalia without the [television] pictures and I don't think we would have pulled out of Somalia as fast without the [television] pictures of that guy being dragged through the streets."<sup>100</sup>

While most are quick to give television credit for assisting with foreign policy, by no means is it driving the government to change policies, according to Martin. He said, "All these known facts [about military operations] are already known to the decision-makers. All we [in the broadcast media] are doing is increasing the circle of knowledge by several million people."<sup>101</sup> Clancy said, "There is no doubt the media influences the government to take military action, but let's put the buck right where it belongs. The media don't have the power to send troops from the United States anywhere in the world; the politicians do."<sup>102</sup> Rochelle said, "The media have the ability to inform the public. The public has the ability to force the government to change [foreign] policy. Very few actions are taken without a consideration of what the public response is going to be ... The media lay the issues out and the public makes things happen"<sup>103</sup> Likewise, Utley is not convinced the media play an active

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<sup>99</sup>Smith.

<sup>100</sup>Martin.

<sup>101</sup>Martin.

<sup>102</sup>Clancy.

<sup>103</sup>Rochelle.

role in military foreign policy. He stated:

The media don't have the ability to sway the government in most instances. Yes, they have power in a very few situations we've seen where the images are so powerful in a highly marginal situation. Both cases that come to mind involved U.S. casualties. One was Beirut, when the U.S. Marine barracks was blown up, and the second was Somalia when the American troops were killed and dragged through the streets. Those were situations in which there was obviously revulsion in this country and obviously questions raised about why we were there and was it worth our American lives. Both were situations we [Americans] didn't understand and didn't feel it was worth that price.<sup>104</sup>

The author found the media representatives were split on whether live news coverage of dead or injured U.S. soldiers would lead to a change in foreign policy. Some supposed that politicians are wary of the psychological effect death has on the American population and avoid conflicts that could produce large U.S. casualties.

Miklaszewski points to the air strikes conducted in Kosovo, saying:

The White House, as well as other NATO leaders, knew that as soon as the death toll started to rise, public opinion would quickly turn against them and the whole deal was off. The goal [of NATO], which was met incredibly, was a minimum of casualties on the U.S. side and a minimum of civilian casualties in Kosovo. It affected the way the war was conducted because of public opinion, not because the military planners felt that a few more hundred [deaths] was not worth ending the war in half the time.<sup>105</sup>

Smith had similar comments, noting it would be agonizing for Americans to see dead troops on television. He said, "It leads in many instances to an appalling feeling on the part of the American people and then a serious questioning of whether this particular military operation is in our vital national interests. That kind of thing can

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<sup>104</sup>Utley.

<sup>105</sup>Miklaszewski.

have an impact.”<sup>106</sup>

Others thought that as long as the mission was clearly reasoned and the American population backed it, showing casualties on television would not be enough to cause the operation to fail. Utley said, “Americans will back an operation as long as they think it’s worthwhile. Therefore, the gravity of pictures of dead Americans has to be taken into context based on the situation.”<sup>107</sup> McWethy said ABC News’ policy is to show great restraint before showing American casualties. He stated:

When we have images of dead American servicemen, we do not show them until next of kin have been notified ... We are very restrained ... and I think all media outlets are ... Showing dead Americans has an impact partly because of the way our leadership prepares the nation for what is about to happen. If they say a lot going in that we expect casualties for the job we are about to do, then I think Americans are more prepared for body bags and the consequences of conflict. If the nation has not been prepared for casualties, then I think it has a much greater national impact ... We are the messengers and sometimes we distort the message, but often it has more to do with the way the government prepares the nation.<sup>108</sup>

Rochelle said his CNN’s policy is much the same, “You would find that this network, and I suspect the other’s too, would not put up with showing [footage] where people were actually being killed.”<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Smith.

<sup>107</sup>Utley.

<sup>108</sup>McWethy.

<sup>109</sup>Rochelle.

### Emerging Technologies

Media representatives were divided on the potential for people to use the Internet to exploit battlefield information through live news footage. Some were confident the Internet represented a new journalistic arena, wherein anyone could become a budding reporter with the use of a digital camera, a computer and a web site. The effectiveness of those 'journalists' was the big disagreement. Smith said:

The Internet represents the democratization of the media. You could make a case that, in time, everyone's going to be a person in the media. Everybody who feels like they want to throw something on to a web site will have an opportunity to do that and people will have access to it. It makes it more difficult for the military because, up until now, they could call five or six news organizations and tell them to cease and desist. But how do you do that with tens of thousands of people who are producing video and other products of the war? It complicates the role of a military leader in combat because it's impossible to control.<sup>110</sup>

Miklaszewski was concerned that many Internet sites produce misinformation designed to mislead web users. He said, "When you look at the Internet, you just have no idea who is the source [of information]. Even if it's identified, it's almost impossible to verify. The danger is that the information does gain some currency, and that is difficult to turn around."<sup>111</sup> The fact there are so many web sites producing news made Martin confident that television news networks are where people will continue to seek the most current information on military operations. He said, "You have this problem if you're in a war zone and you get exclusive video with your hand-held camera and you put it on your web site live, who is going to find your site? You

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<sup>110</sup>Smith.

<sup>111</sup>Miklaszewski.

would have to first establish your credentials as someone who could first break a big story before people would know to check your site.”<sup>112</sup>

Others surmised the Internet might be able to compete with television news coverage down the road, but for now it is not a real threat. Utley said, “Anyone’s going to be able to do this once there is better broadband in the next five to ten years. We’ve already seen a lot of television news where the network will get a hold of home video and use it, so the Internet is merely an extension of that.”<sup>113</sup> Clancy said:

When you look at the Internet and the power it has to allow the printed word to be distributed without government censorship in governments that do censor all the time ... this is where the Internet is going to make a huge difference in the near term ... I see it as having a far more positive influence in allowing people to get both sides of the story that they were never ever able to get before when all of the television and radio is completely censored by the military and the regime in power.<sup>114</sup>

The author found most of the media representatives to be much more enthusiastic about television news’ uses for satellite imagery during armed conflicts.

McWethy said:

Commercial satellite images can, will and are changing the way strategists have to deal with the way they prepare for and execute certain strategies. But is that dramatically different from the way we had to prepare, plan and execute strategies when we were being observed spy satellites from our adversaries? To a degree, I don’t think there’s a great deal of difference. The difference is the public may know and the adversaries probably already know. That’s the wave of the future. It means you have to disguise better and use deception. It’s going to require some tactical adjustments on the part of the command authority, but it’s not a death knell for operations

<sup>112</sup>Martin.

<sup>113</sup>Utley.

<sup>114</sup>Clancy.

at all.<sup>115</sup>

*ABC World News Tonight* producer Dean Hovell said the technology is already supplementing news reports. He said, "It's used to show places that are inaccessible to the media. For instance, *ABC News* used images of the missile attacks on the [Osama] Bin Laden camps in Pakistan to show before and after shots demonstrating how successful the attacks were."<sup>116</sup>

Others thought satellite imagery will become an important part of television news coverage during military operations, but the high expense and scarcity of satellites prevents it from making its mark today. Marcia De Sonne, technology director for the National Association of Broadcasters, said, "It's going to get a lot better and a lot less expensive. Once costs come down, it will be more attractive to news organizations. News wants the images in less than six hours and, 10 years from now, that could be feasible."<sup>117</sup> Smith felt it is going to be a powerful tool to expose military force movements in the future. He said, "The opportunities for military surprise are going to be very restricted [because of satellite imagery]. You might still be able to achieve surprise with aircraft, but slow-moving ships or ground troops or tanks are going to be spotted."<sup>118</sup>

Hovell believes satellite imagery might have helped prevent the Gulf War had

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<sup>115</sup>McWethy.

<sup>116</sup>Dean Hovell, Telephone Interview, March 5, 1999.

<sup>117</sup>Marcia De Sonne, Telephone Interview, March 16, 1999.

<sup>118</sup>Smith.

it been available 10 years ago. He stated:

I remember the night before the invasion of Kuwait, we [at ABC] did a report that Iraq had moved 300,000 troops to the border. The next day the invasion occurred. Had we had satellite imaging at that time ... we could have anticipated the build-up and it would have give us time to move our television troops into the area and maybe hold off the whole darn thing. It certainly would have made Iraq think twice about it.<sup>119</sup>

Finally, there were a few media members who thought satellite imaging has no future in the television news business. Martin commented, "The economics of it simply don't pay off. It's too expensive to simply start ordering up satellite pictures. In television terms, the picture is never good enough to justify the expense. Even the best satellite picture looks like hell on television, so I don't think it's much of an issue for the media."<sup>120</sup> Utley concurred, saying:

Private satellites show pretty static pictures, maybe tanks moving in the sand, things out in the open. I don't see that becoming a major factor in television news coverage. I could see how in theory it could be and it's something the military will be thinking about. But television's greatest power is being a communicator of intimate personal moments, which is the close-up down on the ground – being with the troops and the civilians in the thick of things. So I see satellite images as being, at best, used very sparingly in limited situations.<sup>121</sup>

Clancy said, "[Satellite imaging] doesn't make great TV until or unless you have somebody on the ground who can really show you what it looks like ... I don't thinks it's a ratings grabber ... For the most part they are not very interesting photos."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup>Hovell.

<sup>120</sup>Martin.

<sup>121</sup>Utley.

<sup>122</sup>Clancy.

## Comparison of Study Group Findings

### Live Reporting During Armed Conflicts

The military and broadcast media members agreed that all future U.S. armed conflicts will feature television news crews with real-time transmission capabilities beaming back instantaneous images to American viewers. However, the two groups varied on whether the military has the upper-hand in controlling the broadcast media in a war zone. The military, for the most part, believed operations such as Urgent Fury in Grenada in 1983 and Desert Storm in the Middle East in 1991, where the military kept the media under tight control and limited access to troops and locations, are ancient history. The military can limit the media from reporting on U.S. military installations, but because all conflicts are waged on foreign soil not under U.S. control, the broadcast media have nearly unlimited access to U.S. forces. Recent low-intensity conflicts have shown the media are in place and broadcasting before U.S. forces arrive, placing the military in a defensive mode from the start. However, broadcast media members felt the military still largely dictated where, when and how the media cover military forces during an operation. For them, gaining access to troops and locations is still a dicey situation, requiring military approval and assistance.

The military thought a formal agreement between military and broadcast media organizations before an operation began on how media would conduct live reporting would be helpful, but is unrealistic because of the varied situations and locations correspondents can report. The broadcast media agreed that guidelines for

live broadcasting might help decrease confusion during wartime, but ultimately the media, as a watchdog organization, should not be entering into agreements with any arm of the government.

#### Impact on Operational Security

Both groups agreed the broadcast media have to be trusted to make good judgments in deciding to report an event live from a war zone. The military members said that since there is no way to control reporters from airing a story live during an armed conflict, understanding between the two groups could go a long way toward assuring the reporter understands situations that may impact military operational security.

The military and the media are both concerned with television reporting that may breach operational security, putting the lives of troops and civilians in peril. All media members said they would never report a story live or otherwise that could cause death or destruction of U.S. assets.

While the military members are adamant the broadcast media should be denied the right to report live if the situation would clearly put lives at risk, media members are equally adamant the military has no right to impose a blackout of live news reporting in any situation during an armed conflict. Both groups agreed the most likely, albeit too late, solution for rebuking a live news report found to have caused undue harm is for top military officials to speak with the offending media organization and develop plans for avoiding a reoccurrence of the problem.

### Influence on Foreign Policy

Almost overwhelmingly, the military and media agreed the broadcast media influence foreign policy decisions on military operations. By reaching both the general population and decision-makers alike, the media are able to bring to light situations that may require U.S. military intervention. Likewise, the media can also highlight faulty foreign policy through U.S. military abuses or failures, leading to a call for withdrawal from an operation.

The majority of both groups thought live television coverage of U.S. military personnel being killed or injured is not likely to lead to a change in foreign policy, so long as the operation has been explained to the American people and the population has shown support for it. However, as previous examples have illustrated, both groups concluded that if the reasons for undertaking the operation have not been explained and the conflict is generally not supported, morbid images could well cause public support to shift against it and force the government to react.

### Emerging Technologies

Both the military and the broadcast media members thought the Internet was capable of showing real-time information and streaming video of an ongoing military operation, but the effect of that coverage was not believed to be too great. The given reason was there are so many web sites on the Internet that the chances of a few renegade sites giving information that is either graphic or erroneous is hardly likely to change the landscape of legitimate news coverage simply because the sites are hard pressed to find a large, sustained audience. The media members felt people seek their

news from reputable sources such as the major networks, even on the Internet, and will continue to do so.

While the military is not overly concerned with the media's use of satellite imagery to show static images of military operations because the technology is not even close to real-time capable, the broadcast media members pointed to the fact that the technology has already been used to expose genocide in Kosovo and nuclear weapons sites in North Korea, allowing the American population an opportunity to look in on events they would not have seen otherwise. The media, while they admit satellite imagery will never be a primary information-gathering tool, do see space imagery as a fine complement to wartime ground coverage.

#### **Summary of Findings**

- Most military representatives understand that live news coverage is inevitable during wartime.
- Live news coverage during armed conflicts gives instant information to viewers, sometimes at the expense of accuracy and context.
- Military operational planning must include a contingency plan for media before an operation begins.
- The military is justifiably concerned about how much access the media have to wartime operations.
- The military can control what broadcast media videotape on military installations, but has no authority to limit them if they are on public property.
- The attitudes of the military commanders usually dictate the working relations between military and media during any operation.
- Low-intensity conflicts such as Somalia and Kosovo have taught military leaders that international media will be in place before U.S. military forces arrive, putting the military in a catch-up mode when dealing with the media.

- Department of Defense principles for media operations during wartime are nothing more than guidelines. The broadcast media have no allegiance to follow military guidelines, unless they are embedded with forces.
- Broadcast media members must be trusted to make good judgments in deciding whether to report live during a combat situation. If an error is made, military officials should speak with the news organization involved to prevent security breaches.
- Reporters with military knowledge or previous combat experience would be ideal for covering armed conflicts. Unfortunately, most news organizations send general-assignment reporters since military specialists are in short supply.
- The military's primary concern with media coverage during an armed conflict is the possibility of security breaches. Live photographs and videotape of an ongoing operation could provide intelligence data to an adversary, putting U.S. troops and locations in harm's way.
- Most U.S. media members are not going to report a live story that might cause injuries to U.S. troops or foreign civilians.
- Only in rare circumstances can the military control where the broadcast media travel in a military theater and what they videotape, so it must have plans for what to do if media compromise operational security.
- Broadcast media members believe the military still has the upper-hand in dictating how and where the media operate in a combat zone, but the grip has loosened since the Gulf War.
- Live news coverage varies depending on the country the reporter is in and the terrain the war is being waged on.
- Military members are adamant the broadcast media should be denied the right to report live if the situation would clearly put lives at risk.
- Media members are equally adamant the military has no right to impose a blackout of live news reporting in any situation during an armed conflict.
- If the military wants to ensure its troops and equipment remain secure, it is the military's responsibility to keep tactical information away from the media.
- Live news coverage during an armed conflict can have a positive effect for the

military, providing it with real-time intelligence on military strikes and showing U.S. military capabilities that may help de-escalate a situation.

- Both the military and the broadcast media agree television coverage helps shape foreign policy regarding present and future military operations.
- Live television coverage of U.S. military personnel being killed or injured is not likely to lead to a change in foreign policy, so long as the operation has been explained to the American people and the population has shown support for it. If not, morbid images could cause public support to shift and force the government to react.
- The Internet is a tool for gathering real-time information on U.S. military operations.
- Web sites producing streaming videos and up-to-date reports from a military operation are an operational security concern for the U.S. military.
- The military is not overly concerned with the security risks associated with the media's use of satellite imagery because of the time it takes to download and display the photographs.
- Broadcast media are making regular use of civilian satellite imagery, particularly to show photographs of areas inaccessible to media members.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Chapter Overview**

The final chapter provides the author's conclusions based on the research and findings. Recommendations are made on how the military and broadcast media can operate more cohesively together during an armed conflict. Finally, further areas of research are discussed.

#### **Conclusions**

The 1990s saw live television news coverage from war zones become commonplace. From Desert Storm to Allied Force, the decade featured live news reports from CNN, ABC and others that kept viewers glued to the television set, wondering how the situation would play out and if the reporter would come out alive. Scud missile attacks, Navy Seals storming the beach, Army Rangers parachuting into hostile territory – all of these images and more were shown live to Americans through the advances made in television technology.

First, the author concludes that real-time television news coverage has become a fixture of any armed conflict in which the United States participates. In today's operating environment of low-intensity conflicts featuring U.S. forces in the roles of

peacekeeper and humanitarian, the broadcast media have easy access to most conflicts as well as mobile and technologically advanced equipment that allows them to capture American forces live on video. The military's oft-used system of herding media into pools to limit coverage is not an option at the start of these operations where the media are already present waiting for U.S. forces to arrive. To prepare for this, the military must include contingency plans for media coverage in its operational planning, just as it does for harsh weather or terrain. The power of the military to limit the media's ability to report live is typically limited to its own territory, i.e. military bases, ships or encampments. The broadcast media's ability to show U.S. troops on foreign soil, aircraft strikes in faraway capital cities, and clashes between warring factions is virtually unhindered, unless limited by the host-country government.

Second, the military and the broadcast media have to work toward building improved peacetime training programs so media crews and military forces alike become more familiar with each's other capabilities. Military operations over the last 20 years have seen a gradual improvement in military-media relations, but meetings between military and media officials after many of those conflicts have served to highlight the gaps and disagreements that still exist between the two groups. As it stands now, many media members reporting from war zones are general-assignment reporters with limited knowledge of the military and its procedures. When shipped off to cover an armed conflict, these reporters face a sharp learning curve before being able to give accurate, contextual stories of U.S. forces.

Likewise, the military fears the media, a long-held symptom that stems from the belief the media helped turn Americans against the Vietnam War. Many top leaders are wary the broadcast media may expose sensitive military locations or troops to enemy forces through the transmission of television images. Soldiers, airmen and sailors are taught to distrust the media for this reason. Therefore, both the military and the broadcast media could use more time together to alleviate some of the misconceptions held by both organizations.

One way to do this is for the military to expand its internship programs which allow young public affairs officers the opportunity to spend time with media organizations. While the Air Force's current "Education with Industry" (EWI) program sends officers off to public relations firms to enhance their skills, the author would create a new program that sends officers to three-month internships with major television news operations. This would allow them ample time to learn the media 'business' and then return to their jobs to apply and teach what they have learned to others. Similarly, reporters should be encouraged to cover peacetime military exercises held within their operating locations. The author realizes media organizations have neither the time nor the funds to send reporters off to cover non-news events like military exercises, but since most national military correspondents are located in Washington, D.C., it would be prudent to establish a yearly one- or two-week program for correspondents to tour and learn about military operations at nearby Air Force, Navy, Army and Marine locations such as Andrews AFB, Norfolk NAS and Fort Meade. Allowing reporters to meet with top officials as well as with

junior enlisted personnel will produce positive results for both sides. Other major areas such as New York, Chicago, Houston and Chicago could establish similar programs, welcoming interested reporters from all over the country and giving them an indoctrination to military life. Finally, broadcast media representatives should be invited to speak regularly at professional military education programs such as Air War College, Squadron Officer School, Officer Training School, NCO Academy, Airman Leadership School and the service academies.

Established programs like the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation's Media and Security Project, which brings together key media members and leading national security experts to discuss international security issues over a series of lectures and dinners, are helpful, but limiting them to upper-echelon members of both entities is a mistake.<sup>1</sup> Getting junior officers and reporters together for frank discussions on wartime operations would help establish the foundation for a better working relationship throughout the life of their long careers. All of these programs should rotate members regularly so the same ideas are not expressed at each discussion.

Third, the military is correct in trying to protect its forces and equipment from being highlighted by roving television news cameras. Television lights on a landing zone or satellite telephone uplinks can pose a serious problem to operational security. However, on the flip side, television coverage can be a force multiplier, showing off U.S. military might and determination to adversaries, possibly bringing about

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<sup>1</sup>Available on-line at [www.rrmtf.org/journalism/msp.htm](http://www.rrmtf.org/journalism/msp.htm).

negotiations or surrender. While television news organizations admittedly have no desire to expose U.S. military operations, they need to make a concerted effort to understand what operational security is and how their actions can violate it during wartime. To facilitate this, programs like the McCormick Foundation that bring top officials together to discuss the concerns of both sides are appropriate. Both sides must understand what each other's mission is during wartime, and meeting before an operation begins is the only way to assure that operational security has been adequately addressed.

During an operation, broadcast media members should be trusted not to report a story that would compromise the safety of friendly forces. The military can all but assure this by briefing U.S. broadcast media organizations on upcoming missions in return for the promise the information will be held until after the mission is complete. History has shown that media members will not file or report a story they are personally involved in until after U.S. forces are safe.

Fourth, the author concludes that broadcast media images play a key role in shaping the U.S. government's foreign policies on the use of military force. While the media does not set out to press the government into immediate action, merely by covering harrowing events that stir Americans' emotions, television news organizations cause the government to react to public demand. Oftentimes this means sending military forces to obscure areas of the globe to perform peacekeeping and humanitarian missions that would not have been conducted had not television brought the need to light. For example, why the government instructed the military to

aggressively intervene in Kosovo and not in East Timor is a direct result of the broadcast media bringing one region's problems and not the other's into the American public consciousness.

Fifth, the author concludes that live television coverage of U.S. military personnel being killed or injured is not likely to lead to a change in foreign policy, so long as the operation has been explained to the American people and the population has shown support for it. Many people think Americans have become soft in terms of accepting casualties during wartime. However, the truth of the matter is Americans have always been able to accept the possibility of forces being killed when the cause was right. Only 10 years ago, Operation Desert Storm was highly supported even though the chances of a large number of U.S. deaths were considered high at the start of the conflict. That support can be attributed to Americans wanting to see a ruthless dictator relinquish his grip on an invaded nation, something the United States has always felt strongly about. Recent military operations have involved few ground troops, so the fear of death has tapered somewhat. However, if a conflict does come along that involves introducing a large amount of U.S. troops, the government would be wise to not repeat Vietnam and gauge public support before committing heavy numbers to the military theater.

Sixth, the Internet has enabled unaffiliated journalists to gain a larger audience. People have always been able to voice their opinions through newspapers and television. Getting access to those forums was the difficult part. What has also limited most journalists' effectiveness was the size of the audience they could reach.

Taking a newsletter to Kinko's and then handing copies to neighbors is one audience; creating a web site for the same newsletter with the chance to appeal to millions of on-line readers is another. However, while the Internet has allowed for more journalists to reach larger audiences, it has not infringed on the traditional media's ability to distribute news. People still primarily tune in to television news programs to find out how a U.S. military operation is proceeding, foregoing vague web sites that may produce up-to-the-minute information on the same operation. The sheer number of web sites producing text and video is overwhelming, dissuading the practical viewer from wading through the trash to get to the golden sites. As a couple of interviewees said, most people want news that is accurate and confirmed so they can voice their opinions about a military operation with confidence.<sup>2</sup>

Seventh, satellite imaging has become an effective tool for broadcast media organizations. In using one-meter resolution photography from satellites, news programs have been able to show images of denied territories all over the world. No place is safe from a satellite's camera, making both U.S. and foreign militaries susceptible to discovery at the most inopportune times. Already American media have shown images of mass civilian graves in Kosovo and nuclear weapons sites in North Korea using the technology. The increasing number of satellites and the higher quality of these photographs will continue to make satellite imagery increasingly useful for both broadcast and print media during wartime.

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<sup>2</sup>DeFrank; Utley.

### Summary

What the research indicates is that broadcast journalists enjoy more autonomy to report from war zones than ever before. Toting lighter, more mobile, equipment, reporters can provide live coverage virtually unimpeded on the battlefield. They can report from both sides of the line, following American forces while also giving the viewpoints of adversarial forces. Military censorship or security review of media materials, which was common throughout 20<sup>th</sup> century conflicts, is not an issue with live reporting since the information is processed instantaneously, not allowing for cross-checks and deletions. While the military can still control access to its installations and encampments, reporters circumvent this largely through live coverage of civilian populations or troops in the field. This is where the military has little power to halt the videotaping of its assets.

Only 15 years ago, the military kept the media off of the tiny island of Grenada for two days while the invasion was completed. Today, the media would not only gain access to the island, but they would be there ahead of the military waiting for the first forces to parachute in. Broadcast media would have the opportunity to show the event live to the world. However, research indicates correspondents would be prudent enough to self-embargo their footage until U.S. forces had contained the situation. It is a different world indeed, one where the military no longer controls all features of the battlefield.

### **Areas For Further Research**

Based solely on the vast literature review presented in this thesis, it is evident that military-media relations have already been studied in depth. However, the author has several recommendations for subjects for further study.

First, the impacts of both broadcast radio and print products such as newspapers and magazines on U.S. military operations are worthy subjects that would complement this thesis on live television coverage. While television has the power of instant images to compel viewers, radio relies on sound and inflection to produce drama. How does live radio reporting from a war zone differ from television reporting? Is it as effective? Likewise, newspapers and magazines do not have the immediacy of television, but instead produce information with much more depth and analysis. A look at the history of newspaper coverage of war would be useful, as well as an assessment of how print coverage affects public support for a military operation.

Second, the foreign policy debate on how the broadcast media influence the government to use military force is only a small part of this thesis. A more complete look at this subject featuring interviews with political correspondents and members of Congress would be noteworthy, primarily because of the sheer number of missions the U.S. military has been involved in during the last 10 years.

Third, a study of the Internet as a tool for conducting information warfare could enhance the military's understanding of the Internet as a weapon of war. People with the ability to hack into military web sites and change or shut down operations is a concern for the military, as is the use of false information to make U.S.

forces appear brutish and barbaric while conducting peacekeeping operations.

Fourth, a more in-depth look at the media's use of civilian satellite imagery to highlight military clashes would further the knowledge of the capabilities of this new technology. Only in the last year have civilian satellites been launched with the ability to focus in on and photograph objects as small as one-meter wide. How is this technology going to change the way militaries plan and fight wars? How much better is satellite imagery likely to get?

Finally, a study on how the modern battlefield is defined would be interesting. Because the United States is primarily involved in air operations during most conflicts, how does that change the classic nature of warfare of pitting large ground armies against each other? Is it possible to have a bloodless war where aircraft determine the outcome through the destruction of an opponent's government facilities?

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**APPENDIX A****DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DIRECTIVE 5122.5****March 29, 1996**

- Subject: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs
- References: (a) Title 10, United States Code  
(b) DoD Directive 5122.5, "Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs," December 2, 1993 (hereby canceled)  
(c) Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security Information," April 17, 1995  
(d) DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release," April 2, 1982  
(e) through (q), see enclosure E1.

**1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Secretary of Defense by Section 113 of reference (a), this Directive reissues reference (b) to establish the position of ASD(PA), with responsibilities, functions, and authorities of the ASD(PA) as prescribed herein.

**2. APPLICABILITY**

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components").

**3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS**

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs is the principal staff advisor and assistant to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for DoD public information, internal information, the Freedom of Information Act, mandatory declassification review and clearance of DoD information for public release, community relations, information training, and audiovisual matters.

In the exercise of this responsibility, the ASD(PA) shall:

- 3.1. Develop policies, plans, and programs in support of DoD objectives and operations.

- 3.2. Ensure a free flow of news and information to the media, the general public, the internal audiences of the Armed Forces, and other appropriate forums, limited only by national security constraints as authorized by reference (c) and valid statutory mandates or exemptions. Enclosures E2. and E3. delineate principles that guide the Department of Defense with respect to media coverage of DoD activities.
- 3.3. Act as the spokesperson and releasing agency for DoD information and audiovisual materials to news media representatives; evaluate news media requests for DoD support and cooperation; and determine appropriate level of DoD participation.
- 3.4. Monitor, evaluate, and develop systems, standards, and procedures for the administration and management of approved policies, plans, and programs.
- 3.5. Issue policy guidance to the DoD Components. 3
- .6. As required, participate with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) in planning, programming, and budgeting activities.
- 3.7. Promote coordination, cooperation, and mutual understanding among DoD Components and with other Federal, State, and local agencies and the civilian community.
- 3.8. Serve on boards, committees, and other groups, and represent the Secretary of Defense outside of the Department of Defense.
- 3.9. Conduct security reviews, consistent with E.O. 12958 and DoD Directives 5230.9 and 5400.4 (references (c), (d), and (e)), of all material prepared for public release and publication originated by the Department of Defense, including testimony before congressional committees, or by its contractors, DoD employees as individuals, and material submitted by sources outside the Department of Defense for such review.
- 3.10. Review for conflict with established DoD and national security policies or programs, official speeches, news releases, photographs, films, and other information originated within the Department of Defense for public release, or similar material submitted for review by other executive agencies of the U.S. Government.
- 3.11. Oversee the provision of news analysis and news clipping services for the OSD, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Military Departments' headquarters.
- 3.12. As required, prepare speeches, public statements, congressional testimony, articles for publication, and other materials for public release by selected DoD and White House officials.

- 3.13. Serve as official point of contact for public and media appearances by DoD officials, and conduct advanced planning and coordination, as required, with private, public, and media organizations for such events.
- 3.14. Receive, analyze, and reply to inquiries regarding DoD policies, programs, or activities that are received from the general public either directly or from other Government Agencies. Prepare and provide to the referring office replies to inquiries from the general public that are forwarded from the Congress and the White House.
- 3.15. Evaluate and approve:
  - 3.15.1. Requests for DoD cooperation in programs involving relations with the public consistent with DoD Directive 5410.18 and DoD Instruction 5410.19 (references (f) and (g)).
  - 3.15.2. Requests by news media representatives or other non-DoD personnel for travel in military carriers for public affairs purposes.
- 3.16. Establish policy for the Department of Defense Freedom of Information Act Program consistent with 5 U.S.C. 552 (reference (h)) and DoD Directive 5400.7 (reference (i)).
- 3.17. Direct and administer the Freedom of Information Act Program consistent with reference (i) and DoD Instruction 5400.10 (reference (j)), and the access portion of the DoD Privacy Act consistent with DoD Directive 5400.11 (reference (k)) for the OSD, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other DoD Components as may be assigned.
- 3.18. Direct and administer the Mandatory Declassification Review Program consistent with E.O. 12958 and DoD Directive 5200.1 (references (c) and (l)) for the OSD, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and other DoD Components as may be assigned.
- 3.19. Provide DoD assistance to non-Government, entertainment-oriented motion picture, television, and video productions consistent with DoD Instruction 5410.16 (reference (m)).
- 3.20. Evaluate and coordinate the DoD response to requests for speakers received by the Department of Defense and, as required, assist in scheduling, programming, and drafting speeches for the participation of qualified personnel.
- 3.21. Perform such other functions as the Secretary of Defense may assign.

#### **4. RELATIONSHIPS**

- 4.1. In the performance of assigned functions and responsibilities, the ASD(PA) shall:

- 4.1.1. Report directly to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense.
  - 4.1.2. Exercise direction, authority, and control over the American Forces Information Service in accordance with DoD Directive 5122.10 (reference (n)).
  - 4.1.3. Coordinate and exchange information with other OSD officials, heads of the DoD Components, and Federal officials having collateral or related functions.
  - 4.1.4. Use existing facilities and services of the Department of Defense and other Federal Agencies to avoid duplication and achieve maximum efficiency and economy.
  - 4.1.5. Maintain liaison with and provide assistance to the general public, representatives of the news media, and private organizations seeking information relating to the activities of the Department of Defense.
- 4.2. Other OSD officials and heads of the DoD Components shall coordinate with the ASD(PA) on all matters related to the functions cited in section 3., above.

## 5. AUTHORITIES

The ASD(PA) is hereby delegated authority to:

- 5.1. Issue DoD Instructions, Publications, and one-time directive-type memoranda, consistent with DoD 5025.1-M (reference (o)), that carry out policies approved by the Secretary of Defense in assigned fields of responsibility. Instructions to the Military Departments shall be issued through the Secretaries of those Departments, or their designees. Instructions to Unified Combatant Commands regarding public affairs matters shall be issued directly to the Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands. Instructions that have operational implications shall be coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, consistent with DoD Directive 5105.35 (reference (p)).
- 5.2. Obtain reports, information, advice, and assistance, consistent with the policies and criteria of DoD Directive 8910.1 (reference (q)), as necessary.
- 5.3. Communicate directly with the DoD Components. The channel of communications with the Unified Combatant Commands regarding public affairs matters shall be between the ASD(PA) and the Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands. Communications that have operational implications shall be coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff consistent with reference (p).
- 5.4. Communicate with other Government Agencies, representatives of the

Legislative Branch, and members of the public.

5.5. Establish arrangements for DoD participation in those non-DoD Government programs for which the ASD(PA) has been assigned primary staff cognizance.

5.6. Act as the sole agent at the Seat of Government for the release of official DoD information for dissemination through any form of public information media.

5.7. Establish accreditation criteria and serve as the approving and issuing authority for credentials for news gathering media representatives traveling in connection with coverage of official DoD activities.

5.8. Approve military participation in public exhibitions, demonstrations, and ceremonies of national or international significance.

5.9. In the absence of a known DoD originator of classified information, declassify official information submitted for security review, mandatory declassification review, and in response to Freedom of Information Act (reference (i)) actions.

## **6. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Directive is effective immediately.

### *Enclosures - 3*

1. References, continued
2. Principles of Information
3. Statement of DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations

## **E1. ENCLOSURE 1**

### *REFERENCES, continued*

- (e) DoD Directive 5400.4, "Provision of Information to Congress," January 30, 1978
- (f) DoD Directive 5410.18, "Community Relations," July 3, 1974
- (g) DoD Instruction 5410.19, "Armed Forces Community Relations," July 19, 1979
- (h) Section 552 of title 5, United States Code
- (i) DoD Directive 5400.7, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program," May 13, 1988
- (j) DoD Instruction 5400.10, "OSD Implementation of DoD Freedom of Information Act Program," January 24, 1991
- (k) DoD Directive 5400.11, "Department of Defense Privacy Program," June 9, 1982
- (l) DoD Directive 5200.1, "DoD Information Security Program," June 7, 1982

- (m) DoD Instruction 5410.16, "DoD Assistance to Non-Government, Entertainment-Oriented Motion Picture, Television, and Video Productions," January 26, 1988
- (n) DoD Directive 5122.10, "American Forces Information Service," February 14, 1995
- (o) DoD 5025.1-M, "DoD Directives System Procedures," August 1994, authorized by DoD Directive 5025.1, June 24, 1994
- (p) DoD Directive 5105.35, "Responsibilities of Unified and Specified Commands in Public Affairs Matters," May 7, 1965
- (q) DoD Directive 8910.1, "Management and Control of Information Requirements," June 11, 1993

## **E2. ENCLOSURE 2**

### *PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION*

It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered in a timely manner. In carrying out this policy, the following principles of information will apply:

E2.1.1. Information will be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act will be supported in both letter and spirit.

E2.1.2. A free flow of general and military information will be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their dependents.

E2.1.3. Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the Government from criticism or embarrassment.

E2.1.4. Information will be withheld only when disclosure would adversely affect national security or threaten the safety or privacy of the men and women of the Armed Forces.

E2.1.5. The Department's obligation to provide the public with information on its major programs may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination within the Department and with other Government Agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public: propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public affairs programs.

**E3. ENCLOSURE 3***STATEMENT OF DoD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF DoD OPERATIONS*

E3.1.1. Open and independent reporting will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.

E3.1.2. Pools are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. Pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity--within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early-access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

E3.1.3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.

E3.1.4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.

E3.1.5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.

E3.1.6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.

E3.1.7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.

E3.1.8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military will supply public affairs officers with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when Government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means available. The military will not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battle field situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

E3.1.9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool system.

*Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

## APPENDIX B

**Report from the  
Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Media-Military Relations Panel  
August 1984**

### **Statement of Principle**

The American people must be informed about United States military operations and this information can best be provided through both the media and the government. Therefore, the panel believes it is essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and the safety of U.S. forces.

The principle extends the major "Principles of Information" promulgated by the Secretary of Defense on 1 December 1983, which said:

It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and members representing the press, radio and television may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered responsively and as rapidly as possible.

It should be noted that the above statement is in consonance with similar policies stated by most former secretaries of defense.

The panel's statement of principle is also generally consistent with the first two paragraphs contained in "A Statement of Principle on Press Access to Military Operations" issued on 10 January 1984 by 10 major news organizations. These were:

First the highest civilian and military officers of the government should reaffirm the historic principle that American journalists, print and broadcast, with their professional equipment, should be present at U.S. military operations. And the news media should reaffirm their recognition of the importance of U.S. military mission security and troop safety. When essential, both groups can agree on coverage conditions which satisfy safety and security imperatives while, in keeping with the spirit of the First Amendment, permitting independent reporting to the citizens of our free and open society to whom our government is ultimately accountable.

Second, the highest civilian and military officers of the U.S. government should reaffirm that military plans should include planning for press access, in keeping with past traditions. The expertise of government public affairs

officers during the planning of recent Grenada military operations could have met the interests of both the military and the press, to everyone's benefit.

Application of the panel's principle should be adopted both in substance and in spirit. This will make it possible better to meet the needs of both the military and the media during future military operations. The following recommendations by the panel are designed to help make this happen. They are primarily general in nature in view of the almost endless number of variations in military operations that could occur. However, the panel believes that they provide the necessary flexibility and broad guidance to cover almost all situations.

### **Recommendation 1**

That public affairs planning for military operations be conducted concurrently with operational planning. This can be assured in the great majority of cases by implementing the following:

- A. Review all joint planning documents to assure that JCS guidance in public affairs matters is adequate.
- B. When sending implementing orders to Commanders in Chief in the field, direct CINC planners to include consideration of public information assets.
- C. Inform the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) of an impending military operation at the earliest possible time. This information should come from the Secretary of Defense.
- D. Complete the plan, currently being studied, to include a public affairs planning cell in OJCS to help ensure adequate public affairs review of CINC plans.
- E. Insofar as possible and appropriate, institutionalize these steps in written guidance or policy.

### **Recommendation 2**

When it becomes apparent during military operational planning that news media pooling provides the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an operation, planning should provide for the largest possible press pool that is practical and minimize the length of time the pool will be necessary before "full coverage" is feasible.

**Recommendation 3**

That, in connection with the use of pools, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend to the Secretary of Defense that he study the matter of whether to use a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation or notification list of correspondents in case of a military operation for which a pool is required or the establishment of a news agency list for use in the same circumstances.

**Recommendation 4**

That a basic tenet governing media access to military operations should be voluntary compliance by the media with security guidelines or ground rules established and issued by the military. These rules should be as few as possible and should be worked out during the planning process for each operation. Violations would mean exclusion of the correspondent(s) concerned from further coverage of the operation.

**Recommendation 5**

Public affairs planning for military operations should include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel whose function is to assist correspondents in covering the operation adequately.

**Recommendation 6**

Planners should carefully consider media communications requirements to assure the earliest feasible availability. However, these communications must not interfere with combat and combat support operations. If necessary and feasible, plans should include communications facilities dedicated to the news media.

**Recommendation 7**

Planning factors should include provision for intra-and inter-theater transportation support of the media.

**Recommendation 8**

To improve media-military understanding and cooperation:

- A. CJCS should recommend to the Secretary of Defense that a program be undertaken by ASD(PA) for top military public affairs representatives to meet with news organization leadership, to include meetings with individual news organizations, on a reasonably regular

basis to discuss mutual problems, including relationships with the media during military operations and exercises. This program should begin as soon as possible.

- B. Enlarge programs already underway to improve military understanding of the media via public affairs Instruction in service schools, to include media participation when possible.
- C. Seek improved media understanding of the military through more visits by commanders and line officers to news organizations.
- D. CJCS should recommend that the Secretary of Defense host at an early date a working meeting with representatives of the broadcast news media to explore the special problems of ensuring military security when and if there is real-time or near real-time news media audiovisual coverage of a battlefield and, if special problems exist, how they can best be dealt with consistent with the basic principle set for at the beginning of this section of the report.

The panel members fully support the statement of principle and the supporting recommendations listed above and so indicate by their signatures below:

Winant Sidle, CHAIRMAN, Major General, USA, retired  
Brent Baker, Captain, USN  
Keyes Beech  
Scott M. Cutlip  
John T. Halbert  
Billy Hunt  
George Kirschenbauer, Colonel, USA  
A.J. Langguth  
Fred C. Lash, Major, USMC  
James Major, Captain, USN  
Wendell S. Merick  
Robert O'Brien, Colonel, USAF  
Richard S. Salant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)  
Barry Zorthian

*Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

## APPENDIX C

### FRED HOFFMAN'S REPORT Following Operation Just Cause in Panama December 1989

#### Recommendations

1. The Secretary of Defense should issue a policy directive, to be circulated throughout the Department and the Armed Services, stating explicitly his official sponsorship of the media pool and requiring full support of it. That policy statement should make it clear to all that the pool must be given every assistance to report combat by U.S. troops from the start of the operations.
2. All operational plans drafted by the Joint Staff must have an annex spelling out measures to assure that the pool will move with the lead elements of U.S. forces and cover the earliest stages of operations. This principle should be incorporated in overall public affairs plans.
3. A Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs should closely monitor development of operation-related public affairs plans to assure they fulfill all requirements for pool coverage. The Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs should review all such plans. In advance of military action, those plans should be briefed to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff along with the operation plans.
4. Public affairs staff officers and key staff personnel representing policy offices, such as International Security Affairs, should be brought into the planning process at the very earliest stage. The practice of keeping key staff officers with high security clearances out of the planning process in order to limit access to sensitive information should be followed only sparingly and eliminated where possible.
5. In the runup to a military operation, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should send out a message ordering all commanders to give full cooperation to the media pool and its escorts. This requirement should be spelled out unambiguously and should reach down through all the echelons in the chain of command. Such a message should make clear that necessary resources, such as helicopters, ground vehicles, communications equipment, etc., must be earmarked specifically for pool use, that the pool must have ready access to the earliest action and that the safety of the pool members must not be used as a reason to keep the pool from action.

6. The ASD(PA) must be prepared to weigh in aggressively with the Secretary of Defense and the JCS Chairman where necessary to overcome any secrecy or other obstacles blocking prompt deployment of a pool to the scene of action.
7. After a pool has been deployed, the ASD(PA) must be kept informed in a timely fashion of any hitches that may arise. He must be prepared to act immediately, to contact the JCS Chairman, the Joint Staff Director of Operations and other senior officers who can serve to break through any obstacles to the pool. The ASD(PA) should call on the Defense Secretary for help as needed.
8. The ASD(PA) should study a proposal by several of the Panama poolers that future pools deploy in two sections. The first section would be very small and would include only reporters and photographers. The second section, coming later, would bring supporting gear, such as satellite uplink equipment.
9. The national media pool should never again be herded as a single unwieldy unit. It should be broken up after arriving at the scene of action to cover a wider spectrum of the story and then be reassembled periodically to share the reporting results.
10. The pool should be exercised at least once during each quarterly rotation with airborne and other types of military units most likely to be sent on emergency combat missions.
11. During deployments, there should be regular briefings for pool newsmen and newswomen by senior operations officers so the poolers will have an up-to-date and complete overview of the progress of an operation they are covering.
12. There is an urgent need for restructuring of the organization which has the responsibility for handling pool reports sent to the Pentagon for processing and distribution. The ASD(PA) must assure that there is adequate staffing and enough essential equipment to handle the task. The Director of Plans, so long as he has this responsibility, should clearly assign contingency duties among his staff to ensure timely handling of reporters from the pool. Staffers from the Administration Office, Community Relations and other divisions of OASD(PA) should be mobilized to help in such a task as needed.
13. The ASD(PA) should give serious consideration to a suggestion by some of the pool members to create a new pool slot for an editor who would come to the Pentagon during a deployment to lend professional journalism help to the

staff officers handling pool reports. Such a pool editor could edit copy, question content where indicated and help expedite distribution of the reports.

14. The pool escorting system needs overhauling as well. There is no logical reason for the Washington-based escorts to be drawn from the top of the OASD(PA) Plans Division. The head of that division should remain in Washington to oversee getting out the pool products.
15. Pool escorts should be drawn from the most appropriate service, rather than limiting escort duty to officers of the Plans Division. The individual armed service public affairs offices should be required to assign military officers to the pool on a contingency basis. For example, if it's an Army operation, the escorts should be primarily Army officers. In the Panama deployment, the three Washington-based escorts wore Air Force and Navy uniforms in what was an overwhelmingly Army operation.
16. Escorts should deploy in field uniforms or draw them from field commands soon after arriving. The Panama pool escorts wore uniforms befitting a day behind the desk at the Pentagon and this, I found, had a jarring effect on the Army people with whom they dealt.
17. The ASD(PA) should close a major gap in the current system by requiring all pool participant organizations – whether print, still photo, TV or radio – to share all pool products with elements of the news industry. Pool participants must understand they represent the entire industry.
18. Any pool participant refusing to share with all legitimate requesters should be dropped from the pool and replaced by another organization that agrees to abide by time-honored pool practices.
19. There is merit in a suggestion by one of the pool photographers that participating news organizations share the cost of equipment, such as a portable dark room and a negative transmitter, which could be stored at Andrews AFB for ready access in a deployment. Other equipment essential for smooth transmission of pool products, such as satellite uplink gear, might also be acquired and stored in the same manner.
20. All pool-assigned reporters and photographers, not only bureau chiefs, should attend quarterly Pentagon sessions where problems can be discussed and rules and responsibilities underscored.
21. Public Affairs Officers from Unified Commands should meet periodically with pool-assigned reporters and photographers with whom they might have to

work with in some future crises.

*Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

**APPENDIX D****Letter to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney  
from Representatives of the Media  
following Operation Desert Storm**

April 29, 1991

Dear Mr. Secretary,

Please consider this letter as the first step in a process that we hope will lead to improved combat coverage and improved understanding between the military and the media over our respective functions in a democracy.

The Defense Department seems to think, as Pete Williams put it, that "the press gave the American people the best war coverage they ever had." We strongly disagree.

Our sense is that virtually all major news organizations agree that the flow of information to the public was blocked, impeded, or diminished by the policies and practices of the Department of Defense. Pools do not work. Stories and pictures were late or lost. Access to the men and women on the field was interfered with by a needless system of military escorts and copy review. These conditions meant we could not tell the public the full story of those who fought the nation's battle.

Our cooperation in Pentagon pool arrangements since the Sidle Commission has been based on an understanding that pools would provide emergency coverage of short duration. Clearly, in Desert Storm, the military establishment embraced pools as a long-term way of life. The pool system was used in the Persian Gulf War not to facilitate news coverage but to control it.

We are deeply concerned about the abridgement of our right and role to produce timely, independent reporting of Americans at war. We are apprehensive that, because this war was so successfully prosecuted on the battlefield, the virtual control that your department exercised over the American press will become a model for the future.

Our organizations are committed to the proposition that this should not be allowed to happen again. We are seeking a course to preserve the acknowledged need for real security without discarding the role of independent journalism that is also vital for our democracy.

We are intent upon not exercising again the Desert Storm kind of pool system. In fact, there are many who believe no pool system should be agreed to in the future. We cannot accept the limitations on access or the use of monitors to chill reporting. Nor do we want a repeat of the disaster that resulted from unacceptable delays in the transmission of our stories and pictures because of security review requirements.

We have made, and will continue to make, commitments to unilateral coverage. Pentagon coverage guidelines should recognize and facilitate this open coverage, including open access to all American troops and the ability to file expeditiously, without censorship or review.

The signers of this letter met informally at ABC News on April 15 to begin a postwar assessment. The group is not meant as a self-appointed commission to represent all media. We simply felt we had to start somewhere, with a group of manageable size.

We have problems of our own to work out and news organizations are not used to working together. Indeed, an important safeguard to press freedom is that are so competitive. Nevertheless, we are committed to restoring our general ability to function on the battlefield and we hope that a more sensible method of operating can be achieved.

We hope within the next several weeks to arrange a meeting with you to make our points as specifically as we can, to document them and to offer workable changes.

Sincerely,

Stan Cloud, *Time*

Nicholas Horrock, *Chicago Tribune*

Howell Raines, *The New York Times*

Barbara Cohen, CBS News

Albert R. Hunt, *The Wall Street Journal*

Timothy J. Russert, NBC News

Michael Getler, *The Washington Post*

Clark Hoyt, Knight-Ridder, Inc.

Evan Thomas, *Newsweek*

Andrew Glass, Cox Newspapers

Charles Lewis, Hearst Newspapers

George Watson, ABC News

William Headline, Cable News Network

Jack Nelson, *The Los Angeles Times*

Jonathan Wolfman, Associated Press

CC: Pete Williams, Marlin Fitzwater, Gen. Colin L. Powell, Adm. Frank B. Kelso II,  
Gen. Merrill McPeak, Gen. Carl E. Vuono, Gen. Alfred M. Gray

*Source: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Washington, D.C.*

**APPENDIX E****Military Interview Subjects**

- (1) Colonel Don Black – director of public affairs, U.S. Space Command & U.S. Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado
- (2) Col. Virginia Pribyla – director of public affairs, U.S. Pacific Air Forces Command, Hickam AFB, Hawaii
- (3) Lieutenant Colonel Barbara Carr – deputy director of public affairs, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein AB, Germany
- (4) Lieutenant Colonel Jay DeFrank – chief, Air Force media operations division, Pentagon
- (5) Lieutenant Colonel Matt Durham – deputy director of public affairs, U.S. Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado
- (6) Lieutenant Colonel Vic Warzinski – Air Force public affairs officer, Department of Defense press desk, Pentagon
- (7) Lieutenant Colonel (select) Joe Lamarca – chief, media relations, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Florida
- (8) Major Tracy O'Grady-Walsh – chief, public affairs, U.S. Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas
- (9) Captain Adriane Craig – Air Force public affairs officer, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona
- (10) Captain Pat Ryder – chief, Air Force Public Affairs readiness and evaluation, Pentagon

**APPENDIX F****Broadcast Media Interview Subjects**

- (1) Jim Clancy – news anchor and correspondent, CNN International, Atlanta, Georgia
- (2) Marcia DeSonne – director, technology assessment, National Association of Broadcasters, Washington, D.C.
- (3) Dean Hovell – senior producer, ABC World News Tonight, Washington, D.C.
- (4) David Martin – national security correspondent, CBS News, Washington, D.C.
- (5) John McWethy – national security correspondent, ABC News, Washington, D.C.
- (6) Jim Miklaszewski – national security correspondent, NBC News, Washington, D.C.
- (7) Carl Rochelle – general assignment correspondent, CNN, Washington, D.C.
- (8) Rick Sallinger – news reporter, KCNC-TV, Denver, Colorado
- (9) Perry Smith – special consultant, MSNBC, CBS Radio and *U.S. News & World Report*, Augusta, Georgia
- (10) Garrick Utley – national reporter, CNN, New York City, New York

**APPENDIX G****Interview Agenda for Media Representatives**

1. Name/Duty Title.
2. Organization/Location.
3. What is your background, particularly in covering military operations?
4. In your opinion, how has real-time television coverage impacted media operations during war?
5. Does real-time coverage give an accurate picture of what is happening during a military operation, or does it lead to sensationalism and simplification?
6. Have solid guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the broadcast media for conduct during wartime?
7. What guidelines, if any, does your organization have in regards to live reporting from a conflict area?
8. Is there a concern that some reporters may endanger lives by violating established ground rules? Why or why not?
9. In your opinion, should the military have the right to deny media the right to report live from the battlefield? Why or why not?
10. What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is broadcast media found to have compromised the safety of friendly forces?
11. How big a concern is to the media that live television coverage could provide intelligence data to enemy forces?
12. In your opinion, does the media have the ability to influence the U.S. government to make or change foreign policy regarding U.S. military operations strictly through coverage? What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of American service members being injured or killed?
13. New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored in

to media coverage of military conflicts. What added benefits has the Internet provided to media organizations in regards to real-time information of military operations? Internet sites now feature live video streaming from anywhere in the world. What concern is there that the Internet may be used to transmit live war footage without guidelines?

14. What effect might the media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage? How might the broadcast media's use of high-resolution satellite photographs change the landscape of wartime coverage?

15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

**APPENDIX H****Interview Agenda for Military Representatives**

1. Name/Duty Title.
2. Organization/Location.
3. What is your military background (years of service/PA experience/operations supported)?
4. In your opinion, how has real-time television coverage impacted military public affairs operations during war?
5. Does real-time coverage give an accurate picture of what is happening during a military operation, or does it lead to sensationalism and simplification?
6. Have solid guidelines been agreed upon between the military and the broadcast media for conduct during wartime?
7. Have public affairs guidelines adequately addressed the media's capability of real-time coverage from a war zone?
8. Is there concern that reporters may endanger lives by violating ground rules? Why or why not?
9. In your opinion, should the military have the right to deny media the right to report live from the battlefield? Why or why not?
10. What impact does live television coverage have on military operational security? Could live reporting possibly affect the outcome of a battle? What steps should be taken if there is broadcast media found to have compromised the safety of friendly forces?
11. How big a concern is to the military that live television coverage could provide intelligence data to enemy forces?
12. In your opinion, does the media have the ability to influence the U.S. government to make or change foreign policy regarding U.S. military operations strictly through coverage? What possible consequences are there for the American public watching live television coverage of American service members being injured or killed?

13. New technologies such as satellite imaging and the Internet have to be factored in to media coverage of military conflicts. Internet sites now feature live video streaming from anywhere in the world. What concern is there that the Internet may be used to transmit live war footage without guidelines?
14. What effect might the media's use of civilian satellite photographs have on wartime coverage? How might the broadcast media's use of high-resolution satellite photographs change the landscape of wartime coverage?
15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

## APPENDIX I

### Interview Excerpts

#### **Jim Clancy – news anchor and correspondent, CNN International, Atlanta, Georgia**

There's been a fundamental shift in the wars and conflicts we are seeing. The typical use of the military in the past – defending the strategic interests of the United States or another country – is all gone. The military is increasingly being forced into peacekeeping and problem-solving.

#### **Marcia DeSonne – director, technology assessment, National Association of Broadcasters, Washington, D.C.**

The government should not have the right to negate a news organizations legitimate interest in using satellite technology. The issue will continue to blur. It will not get better because future technologies are making the lines much harder to see. It goes beyond the media. It gets into politics and military. At some point, the courts will likely get in to it.

#### **Dean Hovell – senior producer, ABC World News Tonight, Washington, D.C.**

Many times it's used to show places that are inaccessible to the media. For instance, ABC News used images of the missile attacks on the Bin Laden camps in Pakistan to show before and after shots demonstrating how successful the attacks were. It's also been used over North Korea, if you want to locate military sites, commercial satellites can do that easily.

#### **David Martin – national security correspondent, CBS News, Washington, D.C.**

I don't think live reporting has impacted in ways the Pentagon feared. I thought that when this subject of being able to go live from a backpack came up, it was always [from the military's standpoint] in the context of the compromise of operationally important information and intelligence for the enemy. But in all the years I've heard that discussed I've heard of only one case that might fall into that category and that was during Desert Storm ... on the first day U.S. aircraft were flying out of the [Incirlik Air] Base in Turkey ... there was a CNN crew watching them take off from outside the base and I've heard people say that the Iraqi radar lit up. I frankly am very skeptical of that because I'm not sure what the Iraqis' ability to watch television was at that point.

**John McWethy – national security correspondent, ABC News, Washington, D.C.**

I can't envision why the Pentagon should have the authority to impose a blackout on us [in the media]. What they can do is not tell us anything. When American aircraft were preparing to bomb Tripoli [Libya in 1986] ...all the major news organizations at the Pentagon ... knew that the bombers were up and none of us reported it until the bombs were actually dropping. The first reports the attack was underway came from Tripoli, not from Washington. We basically kept a lid on it for more than 12 hours while the F-111s circumnavigated France ... That's the kind of restraint the media shows when they know something is underway and lives are at risk.

One of the most effective ways the military has in the past controlled [the media during war] is to cut us in on what's happening. When a news organization knows that they now know the plan and they are duty-bound not to report it, it puts us on an entirely different plane and a different set of negotiations. You have co-opted us when you embed us. That is a way to control us frankly ... Every time that I have been cut in on very classified operations, it limits what I am able to say even when I get that information from other sources.

**Jim Miklaszewski – national security correspondent, NBC News, Washington, D.C.**

Many times you can only report what you know at the time, and that may not always be truthful or accurate. When you're put in that position, you got to great pain to explain that this is all happening very quickly, this is only what we know so far, we continue to look into these things, etcetera ...and when reporting on foreign capitals, especially those of adversaries, we always put the disclaimers on that the information we are receiving is under tight government control, etcetera. At the same time you could very well make the same disclaimer about news coming out of the White House or the Pentagon. Any governmental organization will try to use the media to their own advantage. It doesn't always necessarily mean they're reporting inaccurately or incorrectly or untruthfully, but it's just the nature of the beast. Everybody's going to put their best foot forward when reporting on events.

**Carl Rochelle – general assignment correspondent, CNN, Washington, D.C.**

The media have the ability to inform the public. The public has the ability to force the government to change [foreign] policy. Very few actions are taken without a consideration of what the public response is going to be back in the

United States. The media itself doesn't directly influence foreign policy. The media lay the issues out and the public makes things happen.

**Rick Sallinger – news reporter, KCNC-TV, Denver, Colorado**

One of the things we [at CNN] were criticized for [during Desert Storm] was that because of live coverage capability we were able to broadcast attacks immediately. For example, when the Iraqis would fire a Scud missile at Saudi Arabia, we could say that the missile just hit and this is where it hit, so CNN came into some criticism for providing intelligence information to the Iraqis. I think after that criticism we were more careful not to broadcast information that would provide information to the opposing side. Any reporting has to be responsible. You don't want to put troops from the country that is hosting you in danger because of your reports and I think there is a way to do that without providing critical intelligence information that could result in loss of life.

**Perry Smith – special consultant, MSNBC, CBS Radio and *U.S. News & World Report*, Augusta, Georgia**

Once you start having live television during wartime, then the rest of the media starts to key off that. *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and a lot of others were writing their stories just sitting there watching CNN all day. In the future you'll see the live television folks – CNN, MSNBC, Fox – will be the driving media organizations that other organizations will be keying off. What that does is change the face of media because *The New York Times* used to get scoops every couple of days, but now they have to do more interpretive journalism because most of the scoops are going to be scarfed up and on the air before they can go to press the next day.

The positive aspect of live television coverage is that it allows people who are really interested in the war to follow it fairly closely and not wait a day or two or five to find out what's going on. However, it's never complete. For instance, during the Kosovo war ... you could kind of get a picture from the ground of the destruction that was taking place and occasionally the Air Force or Navy would give you pictures from the air of bombs falling and airplanes flying around. But from an air war perspective, it's very difficult to put people in the cockpit and get them a feeling for all the shooting that's going on.

**Garrick Utley – national reporter, CNN, New York City, New York**

You could argue that if you're in a combat situation in which there's censorship from the military's point of view for tactical reasons, then I could see a camera being denied from showing a battle or some troop movements. In Vietnam, there were ground rules that everyone followed where reporters wouldn't disclose unit designations or movements until the battle was over. That worked because the coverage was past tense. But I could imagine a situation where if the TV camera was showing an important particular target on our side and that was threatened or vulnerable, then the military wouldn't want that shown around the world. Then I think it would be justified [to deny live reporting]. That would come under the umbrella of not disclosing the movement, vulnerability or designation of forces as the battle is proceeding.

**Colonel Don Black – director of public affairs, U.S. Space Command & U.S. Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado**

Live reporting has impacted [armed conflicts] significantly. Whether we like it or not, if there's a military operation or contingency or civil war or humanitarian activities are going on, the media are going to be there very often before we [the military] are ... History has shown over the last eight years that we in the military are going to be engaged somewhere in the world and the media are going to be there, either before we are or shortly after we are. If we don't plan on how to accommodate the TV coverage, then the initial impressions from the world are going to be skewed. You have to have confidence that the media who are going to be there are going to truly try to be objective in their reporting, but unfortunately that's not always the case, either because the reporter already has some slant they're trying to portray or the parties involved [in the war] are trying to manipulate the media to draw public support to their side.

**Col. Virginia Pribyla – director of public affairs, U.S. Pacific Air Forces Command, Hickam AFB, Hawaii**

We [in the Department of Defense] need to learn to react quickly to trends in reporting that we see starting up because the administration will typically react immediately to a negative news report. If DoD didn't get their prepared response or reaction to the administration, that media coverage typically would cause curtailment of activities that we [in the military] didn't think was necessary ... We need to be talking to the administration about what it is we can and should do to get ahead of that knee-jerk decision that's made on the political side of the house because that isn't always in the best interest of the Department of Defense's goals and objectives.

**Lieutenant Colonel Barbara Carr – deputy director of public affairs, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein AB, Germany**

I don't see us being able to ban media from the "battle field." Of course [Serbian president Slobodan] Milosevic threw out all Western media prior to the start of operations. Interestingly enough, that bought him some advantages from a propaganda stand-point. With on state-run media in Kosovo and Serbia, the government had opportunities to make claims to the Western media that were only partially based on truth and very difficult for NATO to refute. I believe the reality is unless it is an autocratic state, media will be there and there really isn't a way for the military to control that.

**Lieutenant Colonel Jay DeFrank – chief, Air Force media operations division, Pentagon**

What operational people have to accept is that the nature of warfare has changed. Part of it is the types of wars that we're fighting. We're often not fighting from our own soil. We operate in another country, we have to abide by their laws, we have to abide by their security people often, and we cannot necessarily control the journalists who are outside our facilities. So we have to accept that real-time coverage can be a fact of life. During Desert Fox, we had [CNN's] Christiane Amanpour [in Iraq] commenting each time a weapon struck and talking about the location, the type of impact, how many pounds were in the warhead on live TV as it was unfolding. So of course, that's intelligence value to the opposition, but it's also intelligence value to us too. It certainly let us know how accurate we were being, let us know if we had hits.

**Lieutenant Colonel Matt Durham – deputy director of public affairs, U.S. Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado**

The biggest problem for journalists during the Gulf War and in Kosovo was there were very few ground operations. Most of it was air operations ... you see planes take off and land ... but there was nothing to report because the actual combat was being done by the aircraft ... and reporters couldn't go along. They naturally became frustrated and starting reporting on things that had nothing really to do with the operation. That's the kind of operations we're involved in now and the media are getting frustrated because they can't cover them live.

**Lieutenant Colonel Vic Warzinski – Air Force public affairs officer, Department of Defense press desk, Pentagon**

What's happened lately with the advent of new technology and the fact that you can get live television coverage from the battlefield, it's become a real challenge for the [military] public affairs officer. You will see that the news media are much better deployed than the military public affairs organization in a lot of respects. For example, when I went into Bosnia, CNN had already wired the base I was at because they had gone in when it was a U.N. mission. As a consequence, the first airplanes to touch down in Bosnia were covered live by CNN. Our challenge there was playing catch up [with the reporters].

**Lieutenant Colonel (select) Joe Lamarca – chief, media relations, U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Florida**

There's nothing wrong with giving media information. If you're going into a battle, there's nothing wrong with briefing the media on what the battle plan is ahead of time, but the information has to be embargoed so they cannot release it or use it until after the action is completed. That's simply to protect the safety of our troops.

**Major Tracy O'Grady-Walsh – chief, public affairs, U.S. Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas**

I absolutely believe the media influences how people view military operations. When the Marines severed that gondola cable and killed 20 people [in Italy in 1998], it got to the point within 48 hours after that that the president of Italy was talking to our president threatening to kick all American troops out of Italy. I really believe because of the media hype involved in that, showing the blood on the snow before they got interviews with the people in charge, it sent Italian officials into a frenzy, strictly because the media coverage was the only intelligence they were getting.

**Captain Adriane Craig – Air Force public affairs officer, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona**

The media have a great impact on where the military goes to next. Media images can dictate where we [the military will] go next. For example, President Clinton merely mentioned the crisis in Rwanda on television and [U.S. military] planes were flying there before an official order was even given. It's that kind of media coverage that can drive foreign policy.

**Captain Pat Ryder – chief, Air Force Public Affairs readiness and evaluation,  
Pentagon**

A reporter needs to know when live coverage is appropriate and when it isn't and that's my role as a [military] public affairs officer to educate him. If they choose to ignore our requests, if we've planned for and anticipated it, we can minimize the impact that live coverage may. Reporters can broadcast all they want outside the [military] base. They can show our jets taking off and there's nothing we can do about it. The only thing we can do in those situations is be the first to talk to the media and give them a heads up about what's going to happen and what we would like them to do. In return, we will provide updates and information as quickly as we can within the constraints of operational security. My experience has shown that the majority of media are willing to subscribe to that because they know if they burn that relationship for one hot story, when they come asking again for stuff later on in the game, you're not going to be there to meet them.